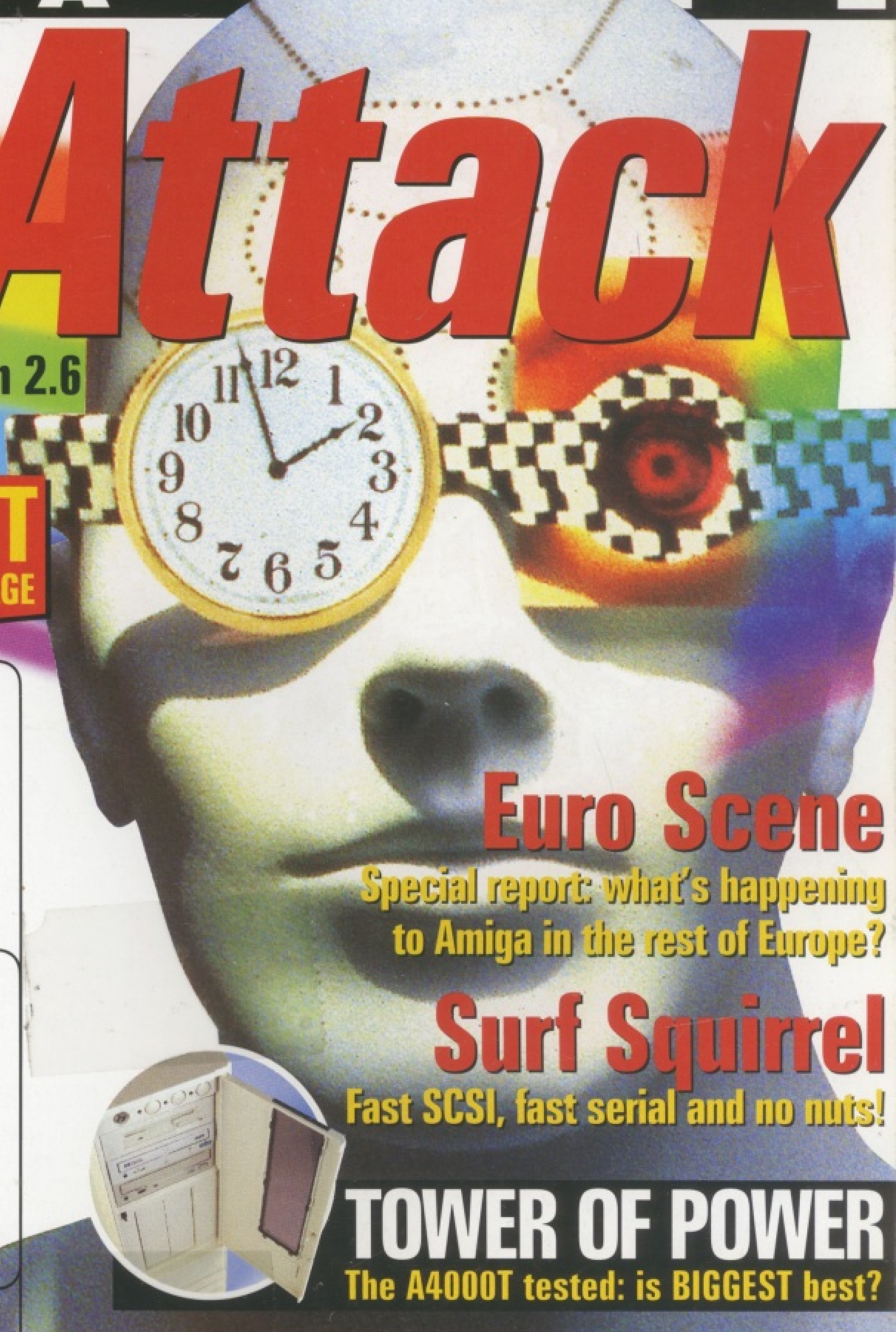
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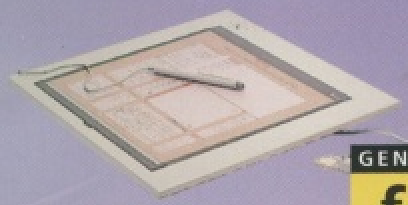
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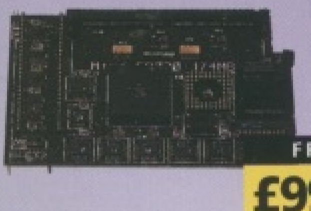
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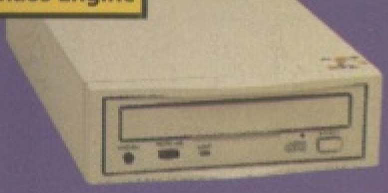
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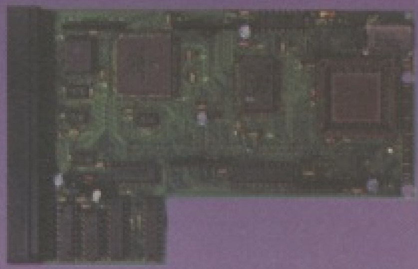
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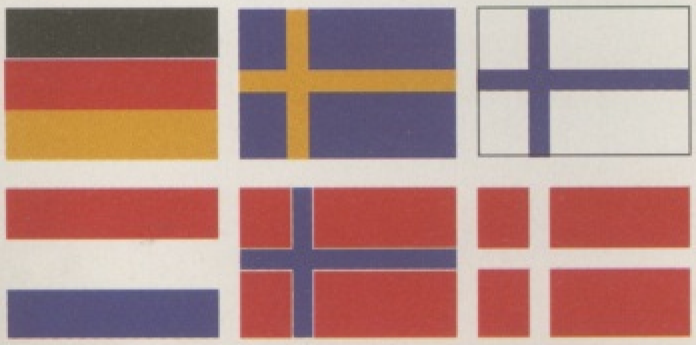
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contents

CU AMIGA MAGAZINE • JULY 1996

Features



News



pios

Games

PREVIEWS

REVIEWS

PLAYERS GUIDES

EXTRAS



Legends 37



Brian Lara's Cricket 33



Primal Rage 34



Wembley Soccer 41

Cover Disks





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REVIEWS

CD-ROMS

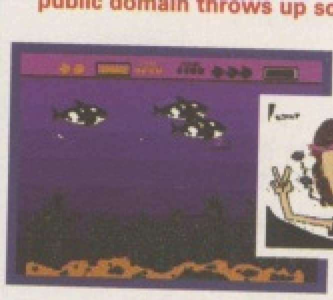

CD-ROMS 71


Surf Squirrel 66

A4000 Tower 54

ProModule 62

Public Domain

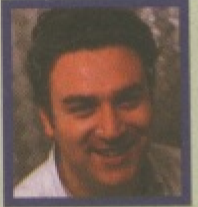




Workshop

Things

Editorial



As yet no announcement has been made by VIScorp or Amiga Technologies regarding the future of their proposed deal and the future of the Amiga itself. Mat Bettinson travelled to Toulouse in France to hear Bill Buck and his partners addressing the Amiga development community for a second time (see news), but nothing conclusive was said. However, it would seem as though VIScorp are more interested in their own ED and its derivatives than the Amiga as we know it. They have said that they would like third parties to develop and sell the Amiga itself. So what will Amiga Technologies do then? The 50 days 'due diligence' which VIScorp have taken advantage of (to assess AT and its assets) ended on 1st June by my reckoning, so we will be looking for some firm announcements from them by next issue.

If VIScorp are looking for third parties to carry on the mantle of Amiga they might not have to look any further than AT's own doorstep. As we go to press three German companies have announced machine and operating system development. One, PIOS, has been set up by ex-Amiga Technologies and Commodore people, including Stefan Domeyer, John Smith, Dr Peter Kittell and Dave Haynie. Phase 5 have announced further PowerPC Amiga-compatible development and ProDAD are working on a new OS too. What next?
Alan Dykes, Editor

Advertisers' Index

Editorial

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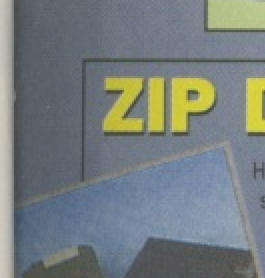


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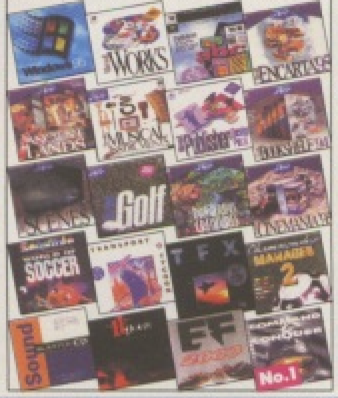
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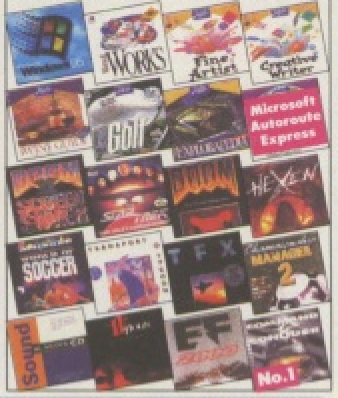
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DISK 136 XiPaint

Starring the full XiPaint 3.2, cover disk 136 also comes equipped with a genealogy program and a voice recognition tool for Workbench.



What's on disk 136

- XiPaint 3.2
- Voice Shell
- Family Connections



▲ XiPaint 3.2 is yours to keep with this issue of CU Amiga Magazine. Its flexible window-based interface makes it ideal for running on either stock Amigas or souped-up 24-bit cards with big displays.

XiPaint 3.2

XiPaint 3.2 on this month's cover disk 136 is a fully functioning 24-bit paint package. Once you've installed it on your hard drive you can set the preferences before loading the program. Double click the XiPrefs icon in the XiPaint drawer to select your screen mode from the list on the left. You can also select the size of the screen using the Select Display button. The Max Undo Memory figure (specified in bytes) is likely to be set to something outrageously large but can be changed to a lower value in order to conserve memory. Try changing it to 100,000 (but don't include the comma). Click on Use to try out the new settings or Save to make them permanent. To avoid a flickering screen select a non-interlaced mode such as Hi-res.

Now you're ready to start the program, so double click the XiPaint program icon. If the screen looks quite bare when you first load, don't worry! You need to call up the various control panels from the Menus menu before you can use them. If you don't already have the basic toolbox open, choose this first (it's the first option from the Menus menu). Next you can load a picture. There was no room to include any on the cover disk so you'll need to find one from your own collection or maybe from a previous CU Amiga cover CD. XiPaint can load a range of picture formats (including IFF and JPEG) and will be set up to use its universal loader, designed to automatically detect the format of an image. Select Open from the Project menu and choose a picture. If you are running on a system that's low on memory then pick a small picture rather than a big one. If you select a picture that's too big to fit in memory you will see a requester announcing 'Couldn't open XiPaint Window, Sorry'.

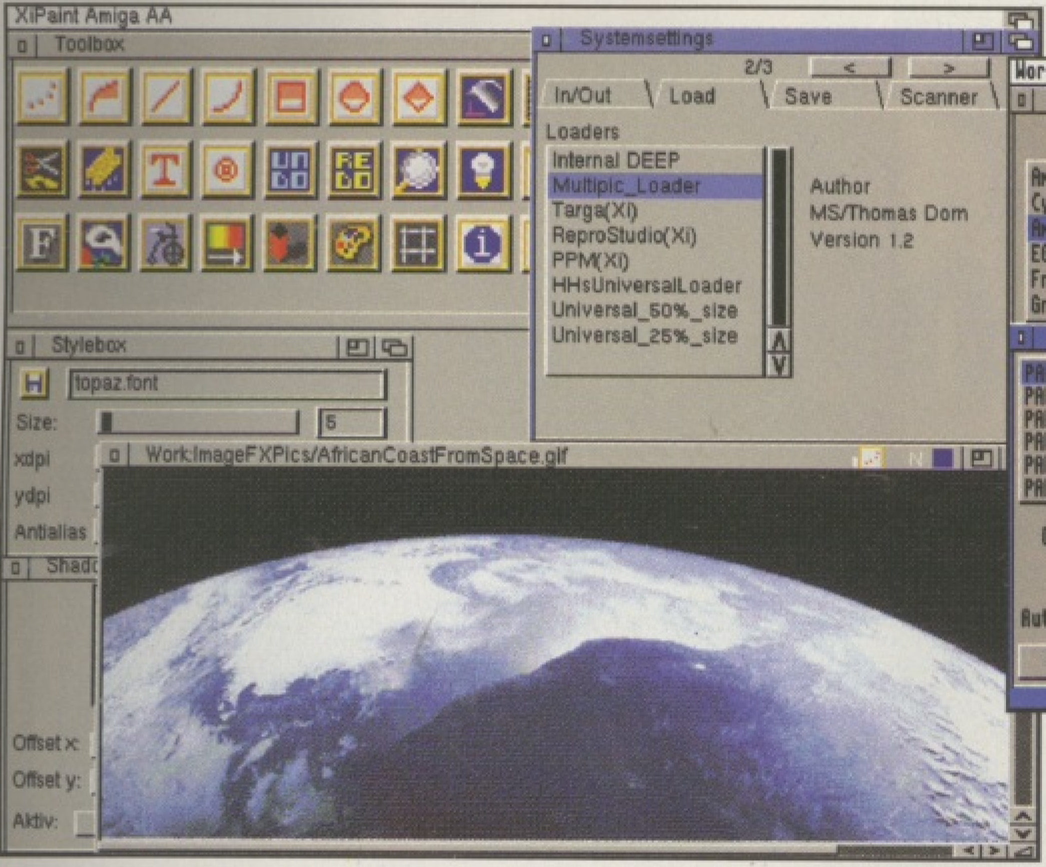
Filters

You can now try out some of the drawing tools or effects filters. The filters are fun so select Filter from the Menus menu, then try out some of the effect on offer. A thumbnail preview will appear shortly to give you an idea of how the picture will turn out. When you've found one you like, click on OK and the main picture will be passed through the filter.

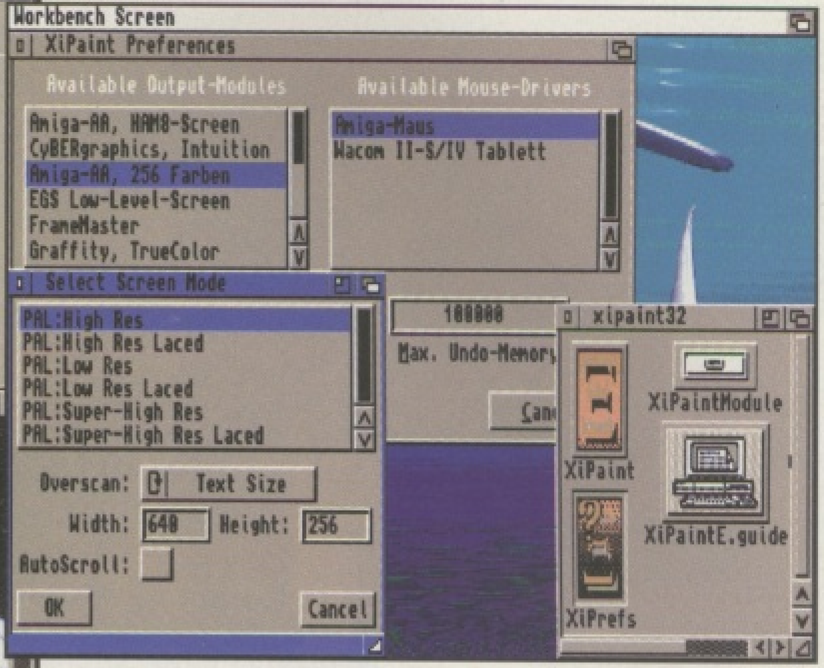
Drawing tools

All the usual drawing tools are available from the toolbox. If the icons look too small you can expand the window to twice the size (by dragging out the corner) and the icons will double in size too. The best way to get to know the various tools is to click the question mark to bring up the help window. Now you can move around the rest of the tools and the help window will tell you what each one does.

Because XiPaint can run on a wide range of screens and display modes, it's left up to you to arrange the windows and menus as you see fit. For example, if you are working on a relatively small 640 x 256 (high-res) screen you won't have much room for windows and control panels and won't want the screen cluttered by windows that you're not using. Arranging



▲ The Multipic Loader should be used as the default loader, it can be accessed from the Settings menu selection.



▲ Before you run the main XiPaint program you should select your preferred screen mode by double clicking the XiPrefs icon.

your own layout couldn't be easier; just select your preferred windows from the Menus menu then size and position them on the screen. When you quit the program, the positions of these will be saved so that next time you load it will be set up in exactly the same way.

Further alterations can be made from the Settings control panel. To move from one page to another you need to use the forward and back page gadgets. You only get a forward gadget on the first page. It's the little arrow near the top right corner of the Settings window. From here you can set many different options, including the load and save formats for you pictures.

24-bit graphics

Even if you don't have a 24-bit graphics display card XiPaint will still produce 24-bit pictures. In other words, pictures made from up to 16 million different colour shades. This might seem rather pointless if you have a non-AGA Amiga but it means that anything you create with XiPaint can be viewed or printed out on a high end graphics system, whether that's something you upgrade to in future or you want to supply artwork to a print house for use on flyers, posters and the like.

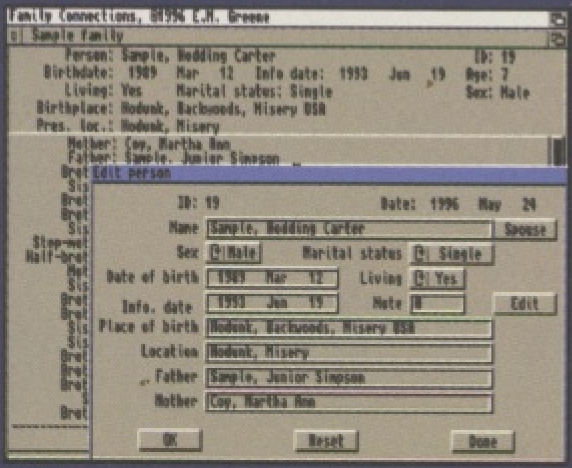
Users of AGA Amigas can view their pictures in HAM-8 mode, which in many cases can look almost as good as full 24-bit colour depth. More information on all aspects of XiPaint are available from the AmigaGuide document in the XiPaint drawer of your hard drive. See the panel below for upgrade details. ■

Upgrade to XiPaint 4.0

If you like what you see, why not upgrade to XiPaint 4.0? It's only available on CD-ROM, which can be obtained in the UK from a number of CD suppliers advertising in the magazine. Alternatively you can get your copy direct from GTI, Zimmersmühlenweg 73, 61440 Oberursel, Germany (tel: +49 6171 85937, fax: +49 6171 8302).

Family connections

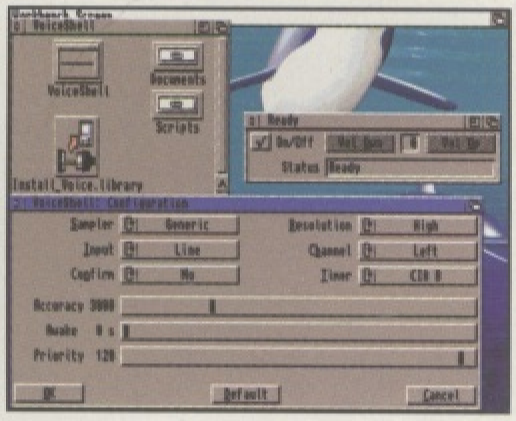
Family Connection is a genealogical data manager, designed to help you log, sort and keep track of a family tree. The full program has capacity for up to 65,533 people, but this version is limited to 20 entries.



The program has been developed in such a way that most of the functions are self explanatory. Inserting new members into the database is straight forward. When it comes to entering dates and so on there's even built-in help to let you know exactly what format you need to use to enter the information properly.

You can run the program straight from the cover disk (after booting from Workbench) and load in the file called Sample to see how it all hangs together. If you find this program useful, the full program is available from the author for a small price. See the documentation on the disk for ordering details.

Voice shell



Voice Shell is an excellent little program that allows you to launch programs from your Workbench by talking into a microphone connected to a sampler cartridge. It's rather like Launch Pad or Tools Daemon but instead of clicking on an icon or choosing a menu item you speak into a microphone. Voice Shell can be taught to recognise a number of words which can then be assigned to different applications.

Voice Shell is compatible with most samplers that connect the parallel port. This includes DSS8 and Perfectsound, as well as the microphone level Voice Master cartridge. If you have trouble connecting a microphone to your sampler cartridge you can work around this by using the microphone input of a hi-fi and connecting the output of this to the sampler.

You can teach Voice Shell to recognise your voice by giving it three versions of each phrase for reference. Each time you say the same thing it will inevitably result in a different waveform but by giving the program three similar versions it can find the key sounds and listen out for them, improving its chances of recognising you next time. Full documentation is included on the disk in the form of AmigaGuide documents.

cover disks
How to Load...

Cover disk 136



XiPaint

In order to use XiPaint you first need to install it to your hard drive. Boot from your hard drive and then insert cover disk 136. Double click the CU136 disk icon and then double click the Extract-XiPaint icon. You'll see a file requester appear asking where you want to install the program. Select the required destination, checking first that you have around 1Mb of free space on the chosen drive partition. Clicking on OK will start the installation.

There's nothing much else to it. Now you can find the XiPaint program in the destination you specified in a drawer called 'XiPaint32'.

Run the XiPrefs part to set up the program for your system before running the main program, not forgetting to change the maximum 'undo' buffer to a reasonable amount or as little as you like to avoid running out of memory straight away.

Voice Shell

Voice Shell is almost completely ready to run from the disk though you'll need to load Workbench first. If you're running from a floppy system you'll need to clear about 18K of file space from the Workbench by deleting something from the Tools or Utilities drawers. For this reason you should use a copy of your Workbench disk. Do not delete anything from your original Workbench disks!

Voice Shell requires the voice.library file to be in your Workbench 'libs' section. Clicking on the Install_Voice.library icon will do all of that for you. You are now ready to load the main program; just double click the VoiceShell program icon. To install it to your hard drive all you need to do is drag the entire VoiceShell drawer onto your hard drive. Once you've installed the voice library you won't need to do it again.

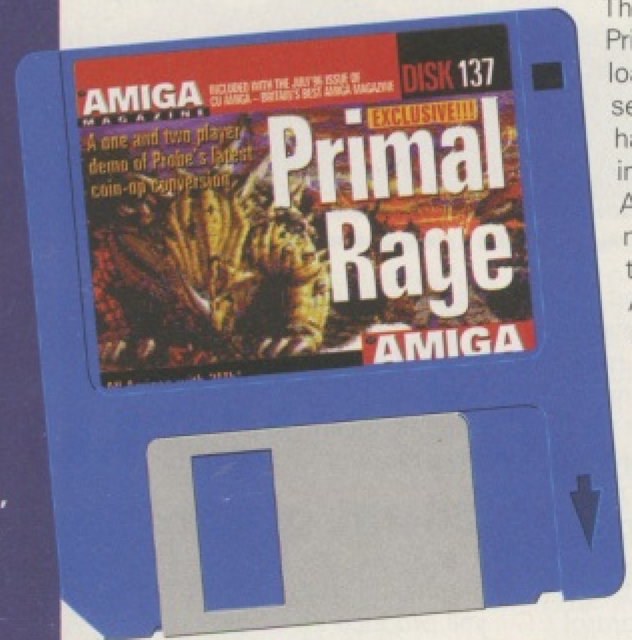
Family Connections

Family Connections can be used straight from the cover disk after loading Workbench. Double click the FamCom drawer and then double click the Family Connections icon to start the program.

Alternatively you can double click the Sample icon which will start up the program with the sample database already loaded.

Cover disk 137

Primal Rage



This month's games disk Primal Rage is as simple to load as they come. It is a self booting disk so all you have to do is pop it in your internal drive and restart the Amiga. Remember, you must have 2Mb RAM for it to run. If you have an A1200 with a trapdoor accelerator and a message like 'needs more than 1Mb' appears on the loading screen then try turning off your Amiga, removing your accelerator card and then booting again it with the Primal Rage disk. This should now work.

IF YOUR DISK WON'T LOAD

We go to great trouble to ensure that the CU Amiga Magazine cover disks will work on common Amiga models. However, if you do experience problems follow this simple guide.

We also vigorously virus check our cover disks on a branded virus checker. If some escape our attention we cannot assume responsibility for it.

1: Remove all unnecessary upgrades and peripherals, such as printers and modems. Some trapdoor expansions can also cause problems.

2: Follow the instructions on this and previous pages exactly.

3: Contact our 3.5 inch disk people, TIB, on their CU Amiga cover disk helpline on 0891 715 929 between 10am and 5pm monday to Friday (calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p peak times. Make sure the person who pays the bill knows you are calling).

If they advise that the disk is faulty, fill in your details in the form below, and send this form, along with the faulty cover disk and a 25p stamped self addressed envelope to:

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TYPE OF AMIGA OWNED: ....

DISK NUMBER: ....

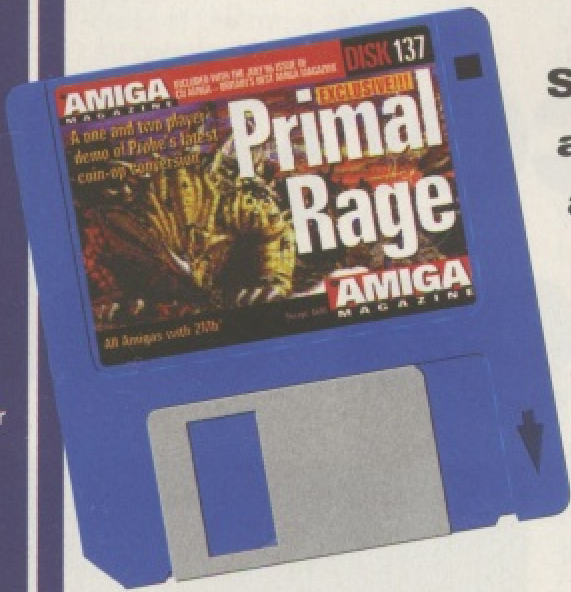
DESCRIBE EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO LOAD THE DISK:

....

DISK 137 Primal Rage

Requires 2Mb RAM

A demo by Probe Entertainment/TWI



Surprise, surprise: almost a year after it was first promised, Primal Rage has been released and here's a demo for you to try.

Primal Rage has been through a very protracted and painful development period, being cut down from a gigantic coin-op to a much less gigantic Sega Genesis game and from there to what we have here: the final Amiga version, designed to run in 2Mb on most Amigas (we have experienced difficulties on A600s).

Each character takes up almost one disk so this single disk demo contains two versions of the same character, Vertigo, a green and blue viper-like monster with legs. This option can be played in the full game too. It is a single or two player game and once you load it up a match will start automatically. If you leave it you will get a rolling demo of the two Vertigos fighting followed by credits. Press the fire button on joystick 1 to access a single player game. If you want to play someone else, simply press the fire button on a second joystick in port 2. This is a 60 second round, best of three bouts game and all the special moves have been enabled.

Vertigo (according to the manual) is a sorceress and so some of her special moves involve magic: she can teleport, cast a paralysis field and stun with her tail. All the moves available (including special moves) are listed in the box far left.



Vertigo's moves

Vertigo has a variety of regular hits available and repeated combinations of these can reduce the brainpower of the opposing player. This will eventually daze your opponent which will allow you to get an extra hit in without fear of reprisal. By comparison with other creatures in Primal Rage, like Armadon, Vertigo's hits do not cause too much damage, so it is important to get as many in as possible. The gore level is automatically switched on in this demo and while it isn't too gory you do know you've caused real damage if blood flies out of the opposition.

In the following instructions T= Towards which means moving the joystick left or right in whatever direction the opposing character is. Likewise A= Away involves moving it away from the character. U= up and D= Down. TD stands for towards-down, TU for towards-up, AU for away-up and AD for away-down, these represent the corner points of the joystick. Experiment, there are other moves too.

STANDING MOVES

(holding fire button) A: Fast tail swipe
(holding fire button) D: Slow tail swipe
(holding fire button) F: Short neck bite
(holding fire button) A/D: Long tail swipe
(holding fire button) F/U: Long neck bite

CROUCHING MOVES

Basically you just sit down by pointing your joystick down (wow! revolutionary). Then press the fire button and Vertigo will stay there. From this position try the following.

(still holding fire button) F: short bite
(holding fire button) A: Slow tail swipe
(holding fire button) U: Slow long bite
(holding fire button) U/F: Very long bite
(holding fire button) D: Overhead tail swipe
(holding fire button) A/D: Long tail swipe – then stand up

JUMPING MOVES AND DEFENCE

To defend yourself you move the joystick away from your opponent, which makes Vertigo crouch. Ducking and jumping is also important in defence.

Jump (up, forward or away)/hold fire/forward: Long bite
Jump (up, forward or away)/hold fire/back: Tail swipe
Jump (up, forward or away)/hold fire/down: Under body tail swipe

SPECIAL MOVES

Special moves are activated by tapping the fire button three times and holding it down on the third press. This will de-activate all the normal moves but allow you to carry out these special ones instead. Special move mode lasts as long as you hold the fire button, but you should be aware that you will not be able to move, crouch or defend yourself in this mode.

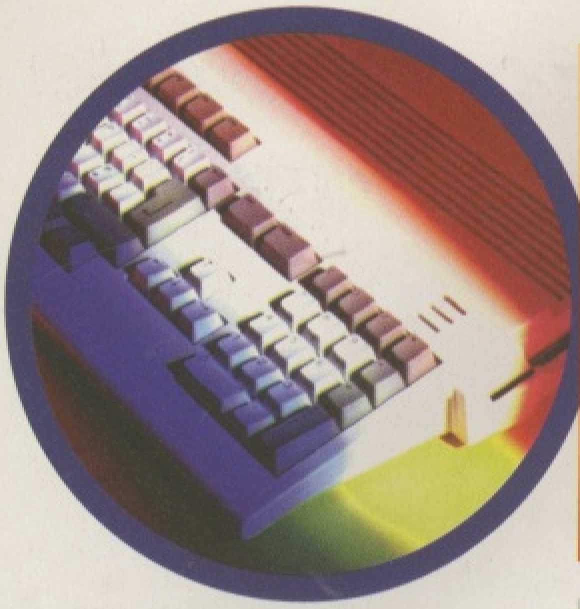
(holding fire button) TTT: Venom Spit (fast)
(holding fire button) TTA: Venom Spit (slow)
(holding fire button) AAA: Grab and hold opponent
(holding fire button) DDD: Teleport to other side of screen
(holding fire button): UUU: Cast immobility spell
(holding fire button): TTD: Flaming tail

FATALITIES

TAAATT
TAADU

EAT HUMAN

DTU



News

VIScorp meet Amiga community

On the 19th of May in Toulouse France, VIScorp held a 'working conference' with the Amiga press, developers and users. CU Amiga Magazine's Mat Bettinson was there.

The day I arrived in Toulouse, situated in the deep south of France, the perfect weather had deteriorated to an overcast drizzle so I felt at home having flown straight from London. William 'Bill' Buck, CEO of VIScorp was on hand to deliver the initial speech. It was carried out in a laid back informal fashion. Mr Buck started off by emphasising that there had been no firm sale of Amiga Technologies as yet and what had transpired was a gentleman's agreement with Helmut Jost, the new CEO of Escom after Manfred Schmitt's resignation (following Escom's reported losses for the last year).

Obviously knowing what was on the minds of everyone jammed into the conference Buck went on to say that VIScorp was committed to the future of the Amiga computer. This was met by murmurs from the crowd.



▲ During a quiet moment, Bill Buck sneaks a look at CU Amiga Magazine's coverage of the VIScorp buy-out.



▲ The VIScorp panel answering questions from the Amiga community. Closest is Carl Sassenrath, head of Software Engineering and behind him David Rosen, business development VP. Bill Bile is at the podium.

Buck went on to say: "We're committed to the Amiga computer because we think the Amiga computer represents a valuable choice to the market place and we believe it can be a profitable business. We think that means that we're going to have to make some changes. We're going to have to lever up the good things that have happened in the past. Certainly, we believe in the operating system. We licensed it because of that. It is the only multimedia and multitasking operating system in the world in our opinion."

Later he referred to the Walker, a subject which has generated more interest in the Amiga than anything else in a long time. His opinion was: "A Walker before Christmas? I don't think so. I think there may be some other company that may decide. It was a good idea but we won't have a Power PC port ready for Christmas. If somebody wants to pick up the ball and run with it, we're ready to try to support that person."

As for redundancies at Amiga Technologies: "There are a lot of people that don't work at Amiga Technologies any more. The ones that we feel have something to add to what we're doing in the future are still there."

From this it appears that Project Walker will be effectively scrapped under VIScorp, unless someone else comes to the rescue – in which case they will help if possible. Bill Buck went on to state that VIScorp planned to revamp the operating system for the fourth quarter of this year and that any company wanting to port this new AmigaOS to the Power PC would again have their support.



▲ Petro Tyschtschenko and William 'Bill' Buck still manage a smile after a gruelling day.

Another shocking revelation by Mr Buck, flying in the face of current Power PC preference, was the assertion that they've "been in conversation with DEC about the Alpha Chip which can do 300MHz. We think that might be the right way to really boost the video. I think that's something that we are going to be working on and you might see something about it in the middle of 1997". This caused a storm with developers, most of whom are disappointed that Amiga Technologies didn't make a firm commitment to Power PC a long time ago.

continued on page 15 ▶▶▶

Phase 5 to build Amiga compatible

BLIZZARD ACCELERATOR SERIES

We've just received amazing news from phase 5, makers of the popular Blizzard, CyberStorm and CyberVision range of Amiga hardware. Wolf Dietrich, Managing Directory of phase 5 digital products, sent us a lengthy press release which details their plans for producing an 'independent Amiga OS-compatible computer system'. In a similar vein to PIOS (see separate story), phase 5 intend to enter the arena and produce an Amiga compatible Power PC-based computer.

Mr Dietrich says: "We will continue to give our full support to the Amiga idea because we were among the first Amiga users we continue to believe in the advantages and superior concepts of the Amiga. However, it is high time for a radical leap forwards in technology that needs to be borne by a vision of a computer for the next millennium. We have seen too many half-hearted efforts in the last few years."

The press release goes on to say how the phase 5 machine is planned to be based on a "highly integrated Custom Chip design which, as a central functional unit, will enable the system to achieve a hitherto unknown performance." Gerald Carda, Technical Director at phase 5 goes on to explain this deviation away from the current in-vogue philosophy that the Amiga should be using stock parts to enable a higher power to price ratio than it was thought custom chips could provide. Carda says: "Concepts that build up on the standard components of the PC world never offer the scope that give a computer system the lead that the Amiga 1000 had over other systems 12 years ago."

Based on the PowerPC as the main processor, phase 5's new computer, in addition to the high performance of the processor, is said to offer hardware support for multimedia (MPEG) and 3D functions, while even the basic system will offer a resolution of 1600x1200 pixels at 24-bit colour depth and a refresh rate of 72Hz. At the same time they claim special functions for image and video effects have been implemented in the hardware.
Phase 5 say that in addition there are audio inputs and outputs in stereo CD quality, a video-compatible and Genlock-capable 24-bit video output and an FBAS/S-VHS video input.

Along with the usual interfaces, phase 5 also add that their system will be rounded off by a Fast SCSI-II controller, a network interface and an ISDN interface. As standard, the machine will have a 120 MHz 603e PowerPC, 16Mb memory, a SCSI hard disk of 1Gb and a quad-speed CD ROM and should be available for a purchase price of around £1,400 or US$2,000 on the basis of the present market prices for the components.

Phase 5 claim that the computer system will be supplied with a completely new operating system written in Native PowerPC code, but with binary compatibility with Amiga OS 3.x. Gerald Carda explains: "As we are already developing an Amiga-compatible PowerPC Exec with an expansion library and a PowerPC CyberGraphX version in the context of the PowerUp developments, it is the logical consequence that the next step will be the innovative development of the other components. An operating system that is compatible with Amiga-OS 3.x makes it possible for the user to continue to use the existing software that can run under CyberGraphX, while developers who already give massive support to CyberGraphX will be able to continue to maintain and develop their products at the present level. In this way we will be enabling Amiga users to switch to the new system without any problems."

Phase 5 say that their PowerUp project, designed to bring Power PC accelerators to the current Amiga range, also continues to make progress. The delivery of the developer PowerPC boards to Amiga developers is planned to commence this summer. Phase 5 cite

phase 5 DIGITAL PRODUCTS

extensive discussions between Motorola, Amiga Technologies and phase 5 for the delays to the project. Phase 5 claim the support for external developers in the PowerUp program is now complete and that more than 250 developers.

Just how all of this interacts with VIScorp's official plans for the Amiga is uncertain. Initially there was some angst towards VIScorp from the phase 5 camp but since then phase 5 have had a meeting with VIScorp in Germany. This news arrived shortly after the French VIScorp Toulouse meeting where VIScorp stated that they may be able to arrange to legitimise their efforts. This could be taken to mean that phase 5 could be commissioned to develop the official Power PC Amiga computer while VIScorp concentrate on the ED set-top box.

Stay tuned to CU Amiga Magazine next month where we should have more hot news of phase 5 developments.

POWER UP
AMIGA™ GOES POWER PC™

◄◄◄ continued from page 14

VIScorp pointed out that they will make an independent decision on what chip to use in their own time and will not be influenced by work already done.

To summarise, there was a strange feeling of pessimism from some and optimism from others as a result of the Toulouse meeting. Software developers were excited at the prospect that VIScorp look set to shift millions of Amigas into the homes of Americans with their ED. It could be argued that the ED is the only way that the Amiga would make a mass comeback. As a Internet on-line box, the ED has the potential to generate huge amounts of sales for software companies online. Also as the ED is an inherently expandable box (at least the stand alone set-top box version and not the integrated units in TVs etc), there was a potential for the Amiga to make a mass comeback with millions of Americans opting to add-on storage devices, keyboards and so on. On the negative front, developers were intensely concerned over the scrapping of Project Walker, the indecision over a choice of CPU and VIScorp's lack of plans to manufacture Amiga computers themselves in the short term.

It's too early to decide if VIScorp is a good or a bad thing for the Amiga computer (or even if they will definitely buy it). If nothing else, they appear to be actively listening to the Amiga users and developers for suggestions. Their willingness to let third party companies develop and produce Amigas and Power PC based Amigas is good news. In an ideal world, perhaps the efforts of PIOS or phase 5 (see separate news pieces) could represent the official Amiga personal computer with VIScorp's support. However, both PIOS and phase 5 have been nothing short of aggressively independent, citing problems with Amiga Technologies, its management and even VIScorp as reasons for why they should go it alone. Unless these problems can be sorted out the Amiga seems set for the sort of competitive (and potentially legal) action it has never known.



▲ **Paul Nolan, of Photogenics fame, conducts a real-time Internet IRC conference from Toulouse.**

AT Defectors start PIOS development

Throughout May rumours abounded concerning the circumstances surrounding Stefan Domeyer's resignation from Amiga Technologies shortly after the VIScorp 'intent of sale' was announced. However, it seems that we haven't heard the last from Mr Domeyer since he's just formed a new company called PIOS Computer AG. The new shareholders in this company want to create a successor to the Amiga for the Amiga community.

Big news indeed, but what exactly do they plan to do and who is behind the plans other than Domeyer? Dr. Klaus F. Bröker, a business lawyer, was elected as the Chairman of the Supervisory Board. After the first meeting of the Supervisory Board, Dr. Bröker stated: "This was the start of a new company, but if you add the experience and background of all founders, PIOS will show its will to succeed very soon. We've decided to enter the North American Market already in the initial phase. Together with our partners, Mr. Dave Haynie and Mr. Andy Finkel, we will found PIOS U.S. Incorporated within the next four weeks."

Dave Haynie and Andy Finkel, ex-Commodore gurus, will start up a new company in North America to head up the PIOS operations on that side of the pond and, as reported separately, the UK's Amiga Technologies' general manager, John Smith, has resigned to take up a share in the PIOS venture and head up their operations in the UK.

John Smith said: "I want a new generation of Power PCs and I want to make it successful in UK!" PIOS' strategy is "to become a reasonable player in the market for consumer computer products. The goal is to reach an overall market share in all countries PIOS goes into of 10 percent until the year 2000. PIOS as a company follows the strategy of developing and marketing PowerPC based architecture, in strong competition to the Windows/Intel monopoly." They continued: "This includes the development and distribution of a native operating system, which will be recognised by the market as the next generation of the former AMIGA OS 3.1. To provide a preemptive multitasking OS with quasi-real-time behaviour will be the biggest advantage of PIOS. PIOS recognises its position as a start-up company; small staff, small costs and small overhead."

PIOS is heavily dependent on a good working relationship to its customers, vendors, design-partners, employees and shareholders."

Big plans indeed for the new company, certainly targeting serious percentages of the entire computing market means the PIOS team didn't set up to strengthen a niche market but rather to bring their Amiga influenced platform into the mainstream. Stefan Domeyer also confirmed to us that Dr Kittel, also of Amiga Technologies, would be taking up a position within PIOS. With such major players involved in the PIOS team, you can be sure CU Amiga Magazine will bring you the latest news and developments from this interesting new development.



▲ If VIScorp have no plans for the Walker maybe a company like PIOS could produce it?

Walker Mania!

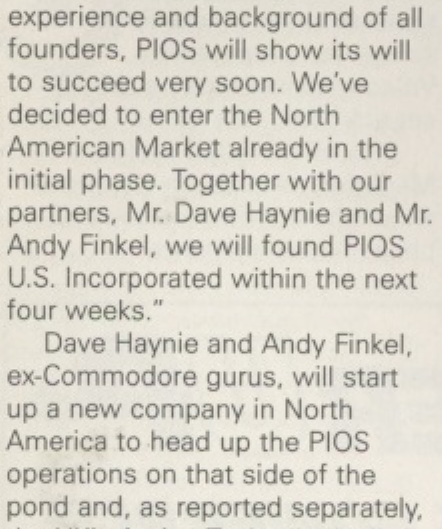
In the midst of negotiations and announcements that will secure or make more uncertain the fate of any further Amiga development the response to our exclusive 'Name The New Amiga' competition has been tremendous. Although the future of the shape of what has become fondly known as the Vader Helmet, the Toaster and The Hoover, is now in the balance, with sources at the rationalised Amiga Technologies indicating that a less radical design might be more appropriate, the future of its components and board design are still very much part of what Amiga Technologies would like to do, buy-out allowing.

The response to the competition has shocked our postman Rob and pleased our new publisher Sandra McClean who wasn't at all sure what this 'thing' was on the cover of our May issue. Amiga Technologies were also pleased with the response and are planning to judge the competition before the August issue goes to press. We should then be able to announce the two winners next month. What has it been called so far? Well the most popular name is Phoenix (incidentally also the name for VIScorp's Amiga purchasing project), but there have been some unusual ones too.

Mr Flynn from Leeds suggested 'Abovo', according to him the Latin for egg – signifying birth and rebeginning. Ron Hill from Newtownabbey in Co. Antrim reckoned on Millenium because it 'sounds swish' and reminds him of the Millennium Falcon. A Miss Busby from Southampton suggested 'Stella' because it looks as though it could blast off into the stars any minute. However, any mention of this name instantly blasts us off to a local hostelry for some similarly titled light refreshment, thus rendering us incapable of sorting out any more post. We'll be sending you the bill Miss Busby!

Others include the highly unlikely Amiga 'Geordie' from Keith Watton, the much more sensible 'Legacy' from Desmond Sawyer, the 'Genesis' (signifying a new beginning) from Mr Robinson in Brum and the simple Amiga 'A' from someone in Norwich with very, very small handwriting and, if their artistic but text-light postcard is anything to go by, no name or fixed address. More entries next month as well as news of the winners of the Surfer and Magic packs.

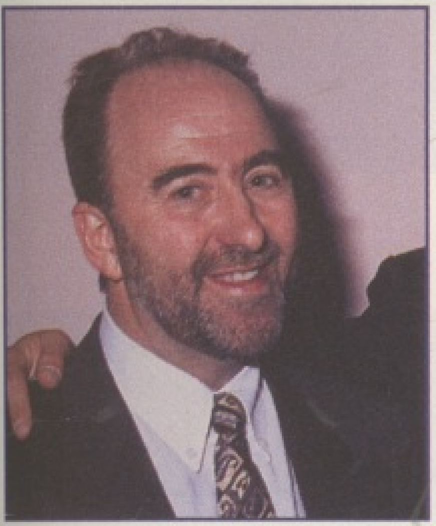
Rewarding night for CU Amiga Magazine



CU Amiga Magazine received a superb five nominations in the annual EMAP Consumer Magazines Editorial Awards, held on 21st May 1996 at Alexandra Palace in London.

The ceremony, hosted by Have I Got News For You cynic and Private Eye Editor Ian Hislop, was attended by nearly 100 other EMAP magazines from all walks of life, including Q, Empire, Match, Total Sport, FHM, Max Power, Car, Golfing World and Motorcycle News [that'll do – ed]. We scooped nominations for, among others, Best Use of Illustration (for Helen Danby's feature illustrations) and the very prestigious Title Of The Year. Mat Bettinson received a nomination for Specialist Of The Year for his excellent Wired World tutorials, but was pipped to the post by a bona fide trainspotter – from Rail, one of EMAP's train titles.

Smith to leave AT



The announcement by ex-Amiga Technologies Financial Director Stefan Domeyer that he is organising a company to produce an Amiga compatible operating system (see PIOS report on page 16) came as a double shock because AT's UK representative John Smith was included in the list of ex-Commodore and AT people joining the project. Smith concluded that "the time has come to move on. I wish Amiga Technologies well, but I see my future somewhere else. I've spent eight years at Commodore and Amiga Technologies and it's not without some regret that I have reached this decision, but I'm not moving far away from the Amiga itself." And of the PIOS project? "It's early days yet but we have no intention to hang around, we intend to act quickly."

John Smith is due to leave Amiga Technologies on June 15th and will continue to work in the UK for the new PIOS company. Amiga Technologies have not yet announced a replacement for him. A representative stated: "We are sorry to see him go, but it was his choice. We have not found a replacement yet but yes we do need an English representative and are looking into replacing him."

L Plate books

HiSoft's sister company, the publishing house Bookmark have just launched two new Amiga orientated books for beginners.

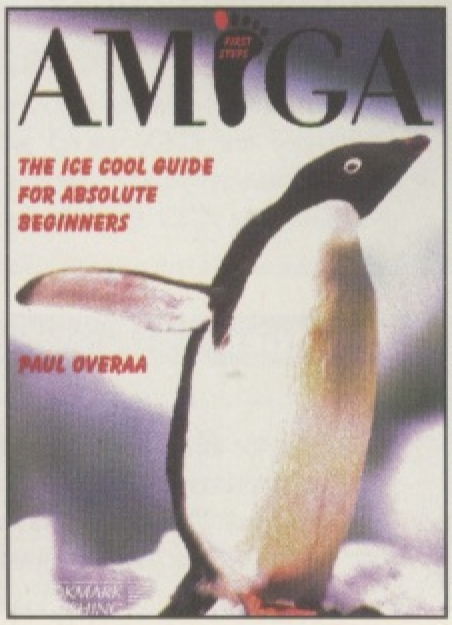
Amiga Surfin and Amiga First Steps are both pitched and priced at the inexperienced end of the Amiga user spectrum, at those who've just bought a new machine or those who are unfamiliar with the Internet.

The First Steps book, by Paul Overaa is basic in the extreme, but probably ideally suited to the real technophobes out there. Experienced users will scoff at it, but we all know people who don't know the difference between Workbench and the power supply and this book looks as though it could just save them from embarrassment and annoyance.

The second book, Amiga Surfing, is a much more in-depth title, written by Karl Jeacle and containing a very good run-down on how to get onto the internet and what you to when you do get there. It's all explained in a logical and easy to understand fashion, but certainly not as simplistic as the First Steps book.

We'll have a closer look at them next month. For more information on either title call Bookmark on 01525 713671.





Worms squirm to the top

The Golden Joysticks awards, advertised in the March issue of CU Amiga Magazine, was held in London on the 8th May 1996.

First of all we have to thank all of those who sent completed forms into us, it helped balance the awards between Amiga and all the other computer and console formats which EMAP publishes for. This resulted in a significant result for Amiga games and Team 17 in particular at the awards, including overall winner, a nomination for Technical Innovation Of The Year for the Alien Breed 3D graphics engine and the highlight of the day for Martyn Brown when Worms received the trophy for Best Original Computer Game and yet another nomination for Computer Game of The Year (won by the PC-CD-ROM game Command And Conquer).

The fact that Worms was up against titles like Command And Conquer and Alien Breed was nominated alongside Windows 95 and the Playstation shows how big an impact you had on the proceedings.

For the Developer Most Dedicated To Amiga award there were three top nominations: Acid Software, Team 17 and, perhaps surprisingly considering they have only one game out, Power Computing, who scooped a nomination for Breathless.



▲ Martyn Brown. Winning Most Original Computer Game award added to Team 17's triumph at ECTS.



▲ Andy Clitheroe (left) receives the Developer Most Dedicated to Amiga Award from Alex Gorman.

In brief

New Monument

ProDAD have announced a new version of their Monument Designer video titling program. Best known for previous CU Amlga Magazine cover disks Adorage and Clarissa, ProDAD are promising such new features as 24-bit output and preview, outline, shadows and perspective for text, sophisticated timing for effects, video box inlay printing and more. The product is available now in Germany at 399DM (£200) but no UK distributor has taken it on yet. It is however likely that Burgess Video who carried Adorage and Clarissa may stock it.

Amiga Translators' Organisation

A new Amiga Translation Organisation (ATO) has been set up, comprising of fifteen Amiga users from around the world. Their plan is to translate the documentation for any shareware and commercial software for only the cost of a copy of the software for each of the team members. This should ensure that documentation is available for new software products in Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, French, Polish, Italian, German and Danish. ATO are still looking for translators and proofreaders and they can be reached via the Internet on the web via http://www2.dk-online.dk/users/ole_Friis/TRANS/ or via E-mail to olef@dk-online.dk

Power PC leaps into 200MHz

IBM and Motorola's co-developed Power PC CPU, the unit tipped to be the new processor for the next generation Amigas, has continued to drive ahead in the speed stakes. IBM recently announced the availability of a 180MHz '604'. Even the 166MHz Pentium only manages 4.76 on the universally accepted SPECint95 benchmark whereas the mighty PPC 604 strolls in at an amazing 6.2 SPECint95. The 50MHz 68060 clocks in at around 1.4 SPECint95. The mind boggles when you consider an Amiga with a CPU faster than the very best the PC world has to offer. IBM and Motorola also have announced 200MHz 603e and 604e CPUs too.

Get your work



CU Amiga Magazine's cover mounted Super CDs have met with universal acclaim. They've even spawned imitators on other magazines. We're determined to continue being biggest and best. In the past we've sourced top software for you first from Aminet and then from other CD manufacturers as well as producing our own exclusive material for you. But we would also like to give you, the reader, exposure for your creations. This is your chance to help us compile the best ever CU Super CD. Doing so will put you in the running to win some excellent prizes as well as having your work immortalised on the World's most widely distributed Amiga CD-ROM.

Do you have artwork, utilities, mods or games that you think are worthy of inclusion on a Super CD? If you have then why wait, submit them now!

The categories for which we would like material submitted are as follows, along with the prizes for the top entry in each category:

1.Graphics artwork

Prizes

- Nova Design's 93% super-star rated ImageFX 2.6
- HiSoft's 92% super-star rated Cinema 4D

2. Sound/module compositions

Prizes

- RBF Soft's new OctaMED Sound Studio (floppy or CD) and sound sample CDs.
- Plus: have your work put onto an audio gold-disk CD (with jewel case and inlay).

2. Games and demos

Prizes

- Team 17's AB3D II, Time Warner's Chaos Engine II
- HiSoft's DevPack assembler and Game Smith

4. Utilities

Prizes

- The new Storm C compiler + assorted programming books
- A Wizard Developments 1 Gig hard drive kit with dev software

published!







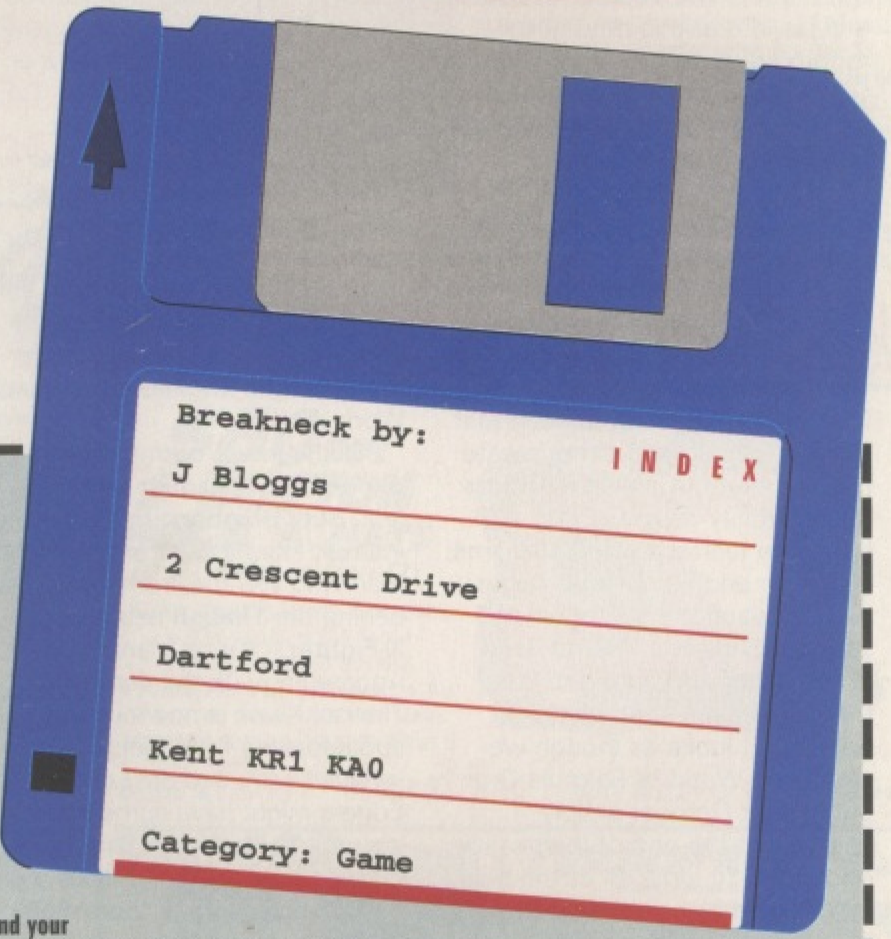
▲ Image FX 2.6. Fancy a full copy of this fantastic package (reviewed this month)? Then send in your artwork/animations for inclusion on our cover CD-ROM!

Alien Breed 3D II – The Killing Grounds. ▶ You could win a copy of this, Chaos Engine 2 and a HISoft Dev kit!

How to send your work in

All entries, including artwork must come to us on one or more disks. Otherwise it can be uploaded to our FTP site as detailed below.

Make sure you label your disks clearly with your name and address, the name of what you are sending in and the category it is being sent into like the example (see right):



Make sure you complete the following form and enclose it with your disks:

My entry for the CU Amiga Magazine Super CD is: ....

The category I am entering it for is: ....

You will need an ....

to load/run this (please enter any compatibility requirements here)

It was created using: ....

My name: ....

My address and postcode: ....

....

My phone number: ....

I hereby acknowledge that the material on these disks is of my own creation and/or I own the copyright to the material:

....

Send your contributions including the form (left) to:
CD Contributions, CU Amiga Magazine, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

If you want to send it to us via our FTP site or Email then this is also welcome. We would suggest that you include all of the information on the postal form left in an accompanying doc to make sure your entry is processed properly. Our addresses are:

Internet FTP: ftp.cu-amiga.co.uk/users/cu-amiga/incoming
or Email (MIME only): cd-contrib@cu-amiga.co.uk

Conditions:

1. What you send to us must be your own creation or you must own the copyright for it. Please indicate this on the relevant space on the form.
2. All entries submitted will be assessed by the CU Amiga Magazine editorial team. It is purely at their discretion who the prizes will be awarded to and what will be included on the CD.
3. It will be assumed that any entry we receive, in the form we receive it, will be freely redistributable unless otherwise stated.
4. The publishing rights for all items sent to us marked for inclusion, whether public domain, shareware or commercially copyrighted will be assumed assigned to us for the purposes of placement on a CU Amiga Magazine CD-ROM. Full title and original copyright for all items remains with the creator.
5. Apart from the prizes offered CU Amiga Magazine makes no other offer of payment whatsoever for material marked for inclusion which is published on a CU Amiga Magazine Super CD-ROM.
6. Because of the anticipated volume of entries we will not be able to return your work to you. Please do not send us a stamped self addressed envelope for return of disks and entries. Make sure you only send us a copy, not the original.

Matt Broughton's

Games in view



Blimey! You turn your back for a couple of seconds and what happens? Before you know it someone's gone and sold our beloved Amiga ... AGAIN! Still, a change is as good as a rest – or something – and if more interest equals more games, I'm a happy man indeed.

As I write, most lucky so and sos are off in L.A. attending the big E3 show going on at the moment. Of course, as well as meaning that I'm in a foul mood, it also means that not only are most people being very cagey and secretive ('cause they want to have surprise news at the show) but most of the people we usually grill for info at this time of the month are nowhere to be seen. GITS! Still, there's games news to be had if you know where to look, and believe me, we know!

First up is some news from **Apex** – the people behind **World Golf** (reviewed a few issues back). Those cheeky Apexters have but one further offering for the Amiga this year – **World of Formula One**. This is (unsurprisingly) a Formula One management simulation that allows the player to either create his own team to manage, or take responsibility of any of the big-name teams such as Williams, Benetton and Ferrari. The game will approach the management side of things in a **Theme Park** kind of way, attempting to keep things nice and simple yet detailed. It looks as though we won't see World of Formula One until about October simply because at the end of the season Apex have to input all of the new team and driver details (ie they want to see who's any good before they commit themselves on the computer!) The game will probably come on about two or three disks and will retail at around the fifteen quid mark. Although this is the only other commercial release from Apex this year, the man behind the myth, Dave Kirk, is actively involved in licenceware stuff, and tells me that **OTM** have been chasing them following their previous title (the aforementioned World Golf).

Sadly there's no more news on the excellent **Leading Edge** project, **Blitz Bombers**, but out of interest I had a call from the young man who you may remember was behind the **Thalion** beat 'em up, **X-Fighter** – Kwok Mann. Apparently, with the demise of Thalion, Kwok is now out and about looking for projects to get involved with, and the Leading Edgers might have some interesting work for him regarding multi-player games. Hmm, curious, non?

God bless 'em, if there's one company that can't be accused of resting on its laurels, it the ever-popular **Vulcan**. With **Valhalla 3: The Fortress of Eve** expected in the next few weeks (retailing at £17.99) the man himself, Paul Carrington explained that, considering they thought they'd only be doing the one Valhalla game, he's finding it hard to come to terms with the fact that they already have the series planned up to **Valhalla 10**!

Not ones to worry about type-casting, Vulcan software have become the Mark Hamill, nay William Shatner of the games industry, known for only one thing – which (in their case) fortunately just happens to be consistently churning out quality products that the punters just can't keep their hands off! According to Paul, sales for the first two games are on the increase again as people discover the new games and want to find out what the originals were like.

Valhalla 3 does, however, offer more than the usual sequel to a sequel, with a brand new perspective view (ie side-on rather than the famous 'look-up-into-the-sky' overhead view) as well as a much-improved control system, more detail, more functions and (god help us) more humour. While the system is now more mouse-driven, Paul goes to great lengths to make it clear that it still remains a puzzle-based adventure rather than a point 'n' click fantasy romp. And what's more, **Valhalla 4** is only a month or so behind this latest addition!

Just to make sure that the Vulcan/Valhalla thing doesn't get too silly, the Portsmouth wonders also have some non-Valhalla related games on the go; the first of which being **Bograts**. Due in a month's time, this is a more traditional puzzle game built around the demo game, **Penguins**, that was last seen doing the rounds some while back. Having spent the last four months in the care of the Vulcans, this game has had a serious face lift, with the addition of new music and graphics, but retaining the same playability.

Jet Pilot is another new Vulcan game to look forward to, with this flight sim being the fruit of a German programmer's two year long labour. Though we won't be seeing anything until August time, this game is being boasted by the Vulcans as the best flight sim you'll find on the A1200. Oo-er.

And that, for my sins, appears to be it this month. Most people are over in L.A. for the big E3 show, but you can be sure we'll be broadcasting any hot news from the show the moment we receive it. Until then, enjoy the HMV charts. Be seeing you ...■

Matt Broughton



▲ Vulcan Software, planning quite a few games, should release Valhalla and the Fortress of Eve first.

HMV GAMES
Amiga Top 10

No	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	Sensi European Edition	Warner
2	Worms	Ocean
3	Premier Manager 3: Deluxe	Gremlin
4	Tracksuit Manager 2	Alternative
5	Sensi 95/96	Warner
6	Super Skidmarks	Guildhall
7	Ultimate Soccer Manager	Sierra
8	Football Glory	Hit Squad
9	Player Manager 2	Virgin
10	Ultimate Soccer Manager 95/96	Hit Squad

Euro View

Following CU Amiga Magazine's April investigation into the availability of Amiga products around the UK, we cross the Channel to check out what the current situation is in Europe.

In the past, Europe has been rich, fertile Amiga ground. German, French, Spanish, Italian and Scandinavian territories in particular have been solid rocks on which the Amiga has grown and flourished. But with the present Amiga climate somewhat colder than it has been, how have these key European markets weathered recent storms?

This is the first of a two-part special special report on the state of Amiga affairs in Europe, focusing this month on Germany and Scandinavia. We asked Alan Bunker to run up an enormous phone bill and approach our colleagues on leading overseas computer publications to hear their thoughts and opinions.

In all of the countries covered here there is an Amiga development and marketing scene of some sort. In Germany, home of AT and Escom, companies like Stefan Ossowski's GTI have cornered the market for CD-ROMs with a bewildering array of products, including the superb Aminet archives, while manufacturers like phase 5, MicroniK and VillageTronic thrive. Publishers and developers such as Ascon are also still producing Amiga games like Pole Position – but are reluctant to translate them into English.

In Sweden the Amiga scene has quietened down somewhat over the last two years, but it's still represented by teams like Liquid Dezign, who produced Slamtilt and Sweden has seen the latest Amiga magazine launch, Amiga Info, in an effort to revive the market. So things are still happening.

Germany

Located: disturbingly close to France.
Famous for: beer; beer festivals; losing to a dubious goal
Our contact: Richard Lowenstein, Amiga Joker

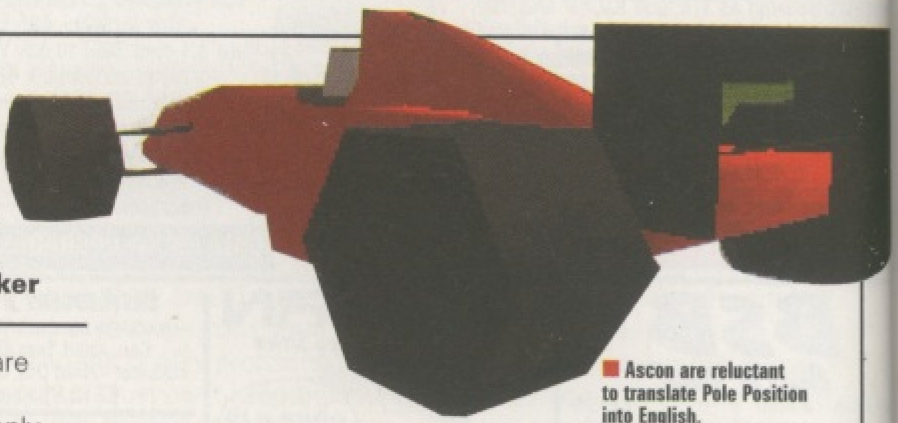


Amiga Joker sells around 90,000 copies each month, whereas the console market is virtually nonexistent in Germany.

"Most Germans now buy Amiga software and hardware by mail order. The retail support is very poor and you'll usually only find Escom selling hardware. As for software, you'll maybe find one or two stores in only the big cities which sell the goods.

"The Amiga's market share is a mere four per cent. These days, people use their Amiga for serious applications rather than gamesplaying. The shift to PC happened about four years ago but we still sell around 90,000 copies of Amiga Joker every month. Our rivals sell about 70,000 each month. What's interesting is that there is virtually no console market (sales of about 60,000 Playstation units and 30,000 Saturns is very poor) and the Atari ST never took off.

"An A1200 costs £300 while software, when you can find it, is about £25. In Germany, we estimate 80% own an A1200, a third of Amiga owners have a CD-ROM drive and most have 6Mb RAM and accelerator boards – very high specs. It's worth noting that the average Amiga user is aged 24 to 25.



Ascon are reluctant to translate Pole Position into English.

"If you're into games, Gloom is big over here as well as a German game called Nemack4. Development of software is actually very healthy with a lot of in-house stuff going on. We're into management games - Kingsoft (German distributor) are releasing Soccer Manager and Ascon are releasing Pole Position. Unfortunately for you, these are aimed solely at the German market and will probably not be localised for the UK.

"The CD32 didn't do too badly at first. Now, users tend to add a keyboard to it and use it for more serious purposes rather than games, though.

"You asked what I would have done if I were in charge of Commodore? Well, the A1200 should have been released five years ago, the Walker three years ago, and the Power Amiga one year ago. The hardware should have been constantly improved and the graphics chips have to be better. Of course, enhanced processor power is important. I would also have supported developers and the press much better because that was a major downfall."

Denmark

Located: on a bit that sticks out into the North Sea.
Famous for: bacon; bacon; more bacon
Our contact: Christian Estrup, Amiga Bladet

"Here in Denmark, it is possible to find almost anything one needs for your Amiga and dealers can usually be persuaded to import special products. With roughly 150,000 owners (to a population of five million), the Amiga has always been popular in Denmark. However, Denmark is also one of the European countries with the most PCs per capita, so the Amiga's current market share is actually rather low.

"Even so, people are eagerly awaiting more Worms, AB3D2 and, of course, the Walker and Power Amigas. These people tend to be real Amiga fans or those who simply can't afford to buy a PC! As for development internal to Denmark, it's next to nothing – the main place for Amiga development used to be Interactivision (InterWord/Base/Spread/Talk, Naughty Ones, etc) but now their Amiga development has almost come to a stop.

"I think VIScorp are in for a very hard time in Denmark trying to re-establish the Amiga's position. With PC prices dropping every month, I think in a year or so the Amiga will be left as nothing but a cult machine for the demo scene. Believe me, I'd love to think otherwise but I don't. If you want to compare prices, an A1200 Magic pack costs £400; an A1200 Magic HD170 £520; A4000/060/6Mb/1Gig £2670; games can cost £40 but top titles usually cost more like £50. Some games don't find their way into Denmark – only about half of those being published. Again, this is due to the size of the market.

"Regarding CD32, with last stocks selling below the £120 mark for some time now, quite a few CD32s have been sold. However, the lack of new titles will quickly put it into the ground. I mean, if you had a few hundred quid and wanted to buy a top-notch games console, I think I'd know which one you'd buy – don't I?

"As for where Commodore went wrong: I would have gone for much more marketing but I would also have pushed for making HD and CD-ROM standard in all machines. Furthermore, I would also have addressed modularity or at least more upgrading possibilities. I've talked to a lot of people who have spent thousands of pounds on highly upgraded A2000's or A3000's and who would have given anything to be able to add an AGA card. Of course, this could have been handled much better if Commodore had pushed RTG thus preventing lots of AGA hardware dependant games and productivity software."



■ Amiga Bladet's Christian Estrup says that although the Amiga has always been popular in Germany, VIScorp still has its work cut out.

Holland

Located: around a large pond
Famous for: sex; tulips; sexy tulips
Our contact: Max Barber, Hoog Spel

"Amiga software and hardware is only available at some small independents and through mail order. For about two to three years now, large distributors have not been selling Amiga software because it wasn't in demand. It is virtually impossible to say what the market share for Amiga is in Holland due to the extremely high rate of parallel imports that have always taken place over here.

"If the Amiga has a future in Holland, I can't see it in any other field than graphics/video applications. As a games machine, it has been long dead because of the lack of distributor support. This is mainly due to piracy – a hit title in Holland sold as little as 100 copies if you were lucky.

"The role of the CD32 was a short-lived one, since the machine flopped rather badly in Holland. But, then again, according to my information the Sony Playstation and Sega Saturn aren't doing very well here either. About 7,000 Playstations and 1,700 Saturns have been sold so far.

"As for prices, over here they are as follows: Amiga 1200 £340 and an Amiga 4000T about £2400 depending on the configuration. I can't really tell you anything else because that's it!"

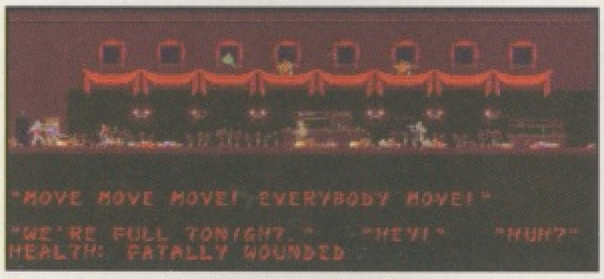


Finland

Located: suspiciously close to Russia
Famous for: being suspiciously friendly and neutral
Our contact: Jarmo Osterman, MikroBitti

"It's pretty hard to get games over here. It's more quiet than it's ever been. Throughout a population of five million, I think there's now about 5,000 Amiga users over here, mainly gamers, and they mostly own A1200s.

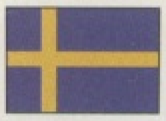
However, to be honest with you, I don't see a future for the Amiga in Finland. There are no sales channels for it here and no development. As for the CD32, well that never made any impact.



■ Finnish company Soumi-Peli's rather violent beat em up Damage may see the light of day in the UK, we'll have to wait and see.

"I think Commodore went wrong in that they they never advertised or marketed the machine. And what the Amiga needed was a CD-ROM and Hard Drive as standard. I really can't tell you any more than this."





Sweden

Located: somewhere cold and northerly
Famous for: trashy pop/rock: Abba, A-ha
Our contact: Christer Rindeblad, HighScore





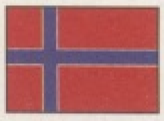
"It's very hard to get hold of Amiga software and hardware in Sweden. Over here, it's very much a hobbyist scene and demo market. Figures from our surveys show that 800,000 households have computers but there are only about 40,000 Amigas still in Sweden. Around 30% of those households have PCs, the emphasis having shifted over the past two to three years. This is partly because companies let their employees buy machines from them at cheap prices so they can work from home.

"To put some perspective onto it, our Amiga magazine (which closed down a long time ago) sold around 20,000 every bi-monthly issue. The only Amiga magazine over here, Amiga Info, is a mid to low professional programming magazine and sells about 2,000 copies each month. And even this is only available on subscription. I think the Amiga has about five or six years left in it but only as a cult machine like the Commodore 64.

"The high point of the Amiga was during 1989 to 1990. But the problem was that Commodore couldn't make up their mind whether to make it a business machine or games machine and they should have decided one way or the other."



■ Amiga Info:the newest recruit to the Amiga magazine market.



Norway

Located: just outside of Wakefield
Famous for: cashing in on our North Sea oil
Our contact: Bjorn Lynne, Team17



"There was never many sales of Amiga software because it's very demo scene oriented and 99% of Amiga owners think it's absurd to pay for a piece of software. These days, Amiga games take up less than 5% of display space in the shops. There are still some Amiga software mail order companies but even they are concentrating more and more on PC software. As for hardware, you can hardly find it in any shops (maybe five shops nationwide) so it's to the mail order companies again.

"The Amiga is still a very popular computer among the underground demo scene, ie; 14-25 year olds who use the computer for sharpening their programming skills and talents (art, music, etc). But most of them use low-end machines (standard A1200s). As for the costs in Norway, hardware is about the same as in the UK but software can be 30%-50% more expensive.

"Four to seven years ago, the Amiga was the only computer to buy if you were in school, didn't have much money to put into a computer system and you wanted cool games, great demos, lots of friends with the same system and a computer on which you could develop your talents. Over the last four years, this has moved more to PC-based systems.

"I really can't see a big future for the Amiga in Norway. Gradually, the remaining Amiga fanatics will move to PC based systems as the Amigas get more outdated by PC power. And with the release of the Sony Playstation in Norway for about £250, I can't see a big gaming market for the Amiga, either.

"I don't think the Amiga should have been marketed as a games machine. It sold well as a games machine but as gamesplayers grew up and wanted a 'professional' system, the Amiga was never a serious option so they moved onto PC systems. And today, the Amiga is also left behind as a games system."



And so...

It's apparent there's a lot of criticism at how the Amiga was marketed. A sense of misdirection from Commodore and lack of adequate upgrading of standard equipment has meant a significant decrease of the Amiga's popularity over the past few years.

What I did notice while talking to people is how, although feeling disappointed, they were still passionate about the machine. True Amiga users appear to be sticking with the Amiga, utilising its great applications abilities for their own purposes. This in itself is quite positive for it does suggest there will always be a place for the machine regardless of numbers. The loyalty of Amiga owners is overwhelming and, as Christer in Sweden commented, our favourite machine will probably still be put to good use for five to six years or more.

Next month, we delve further south, investigating more Amiga markets: France, Italy and Spain. Are these countries holding firm? We'll reveal all. ■

Alan Bunker



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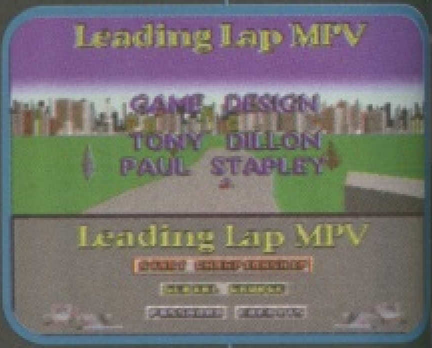
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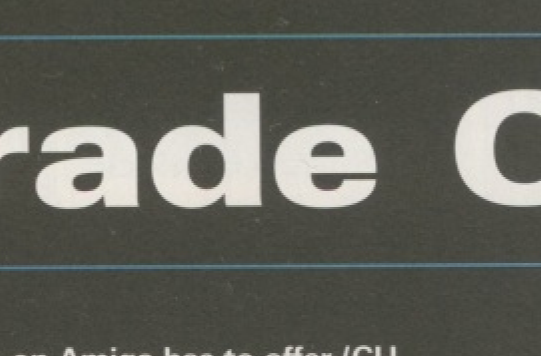
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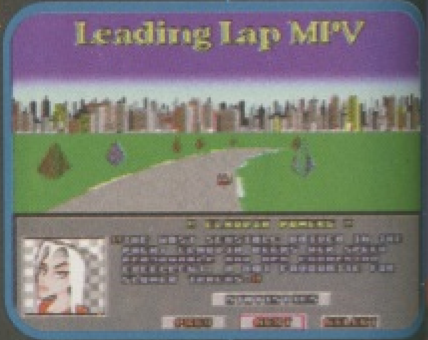


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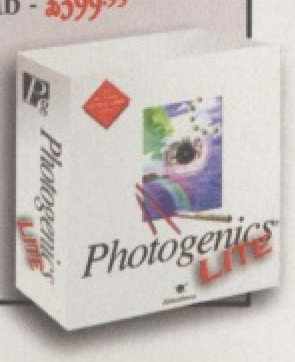
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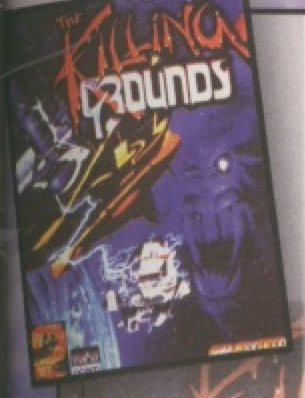


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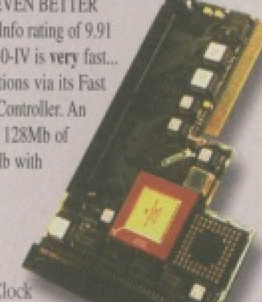
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Mystery Word Grid

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		E			___	T E
P	I	N	C	H	W	R Y
	R				___	W O
S					___	R D

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH .....W	PRESS.......K	BLAST ......A	WRECK .....D
BREAK ....Z	PUNCH .....S	SPRAY C	TURBO......V
STOMP .....T	STAND......R	PRESS ....E	DREAM....O
CRUSH.......I	SCORE .....H	SLANT L	CHASE......P

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ScreenScene



Good things always come to those who wait. Just when you thought that some games would never see the light of day they surprisingly turn up unannounced and just sit there waiting to be reviewed. After much begging and pleading with the programmers, Probe, and the software company, Time Warner, we were getting ready to go through the grieving process, accept that it was over between us and that perhaps Primal Rage and the Amiga was never meant to be. Then it just turned up as simple as that. No sudden announcements of expected arrival dates, no fancy press releases declaring its finished state, just the game itself. The much awaited Euro SWOS also casually sauntered into the office and expected to be reviewed there and then. Life is like that.

Other good news included Krisalis' Legends game finally arriving in for review (courtesy of Guildhall), though, not without a struggle as it has just been completed. However, as if to put a spanner in the works, Championship Manager 2, Chaos Engine 2 and The Killing Grounds are still just inches way from our grasp. But to take your mind off this we've got a really great games section this month. If Euro SWOS, Primal Rage and Legends isn't enough there's lots of pleasant distraction in the shape of Wembley Soccer and XP8. There's also an early glimpse of Audiogenic's latest cricket game Brian Lara's Cricket and some more information on a new game from Holland, Kang-Fu, which according to its publishers, The Greed, is aiming to utilise CD32 technology to the fullest. Very good news indeed.

Lisa Collins
Deputy Editor.

Wembley Soccer p41



Primal Rage p32







Legends p37

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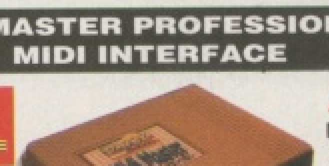
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Kang-Fu

■ **Due for release: TBA ■ Publisher: The Greed © +31 546 818915**

Skippy would have been proud to have been immortalised in this way. If anyone out there is as old (which is not that old) as I am they will remember those special moments that children's TV superhero, Skippy, could, with just a few carefully timed slurping sounds, warn his playmates of impending doom or some small offshore incident.







Amazing stuff. The hero of this game is a kangaroo but he's made of even sterner stuff than TV star Skippy. This little guy will get to kick and shoot his way through this platform game from Dutch based company The Greed (which incidentally stands for Great Effects Development).

Hugo Hoekstra from Greed said that they had spent two years developing Kang-Fu and that as well as being AGA only they have aimed Kang-Fu especially at the CD32, which is good news for game starved CD32 fans out there. To utilise the CD32's potential they are planning on adding 18 original CD surround sound tracks. We've yet to hear these tracks but they should make an interesting break from the shovelware we're used to.

We were promised a rolling demo but it didn't arrive in on time so we have to make do with some slightly older screenshots and some tantalising details of what to expect. Mouthwatering graphics, dual playfields and some class animation are all on the agenda. We should have a review soon. ■

Lisa Collins

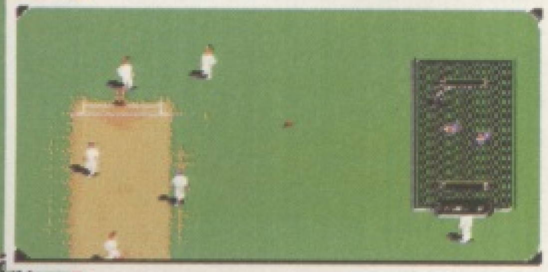
Brian Lara's Cricket

■ **Due for release: Soon ■ Publisher: Audiogenic © 0181 424 2244**

It's a funny old world. Football games are constantly being churned by software houses and in turn are instantly lapped by the hungry hordes of football fans out there. Cricket games, however, are few and far between. (The reason for this, though, might be because the rules of cricket are so bloody hard to understand).

The last cricket game I can remember was Audiogenic's Graeme Gooch's Cricket which was around nearly a century ago (almost). Strangely enough, Audiogenic are back with yet another one, this time in the shape of Brian Lara's Cricket. It will be interesting to see how well if does out there amongst the sea of footy games.







From the early preview version we received in the office I can say that it all looks fairly straightforward. There are three different skill levels to pick from, including amateur, which is useful for someone like me who is completely in the dark when it comes to cricket. You can pick your team and players from the nine test playing countries of which Audiogenic promise up to date details in time for the finished version. How 'up to date' the teams will be is misrepresented slightly due to the omission of one major detail ie "due to technical restrictions we (Audiogenic) have been unable to incorporate players of different colours" which to their credit, Audiogenic apologise for in the game instructions. However, this omission of detail is most bizarre especially considering that the game is even named after a black cricket player!

Once you've picked your not very PC team you're ready for some field combat. After the batting order has been sorted and teams finalised the action starts. A nice touch is that if you're bowling you can see in a supplied inset how many runs the opposition are getting away with. At this point the graphics look OK and the sprites move at a reasonable rate even on on an unexpanded A500.

The choice of music seemed unusual though as it reminded me of a slowed down version of that Little Mermaid classic Under the Sea with a Caribbean twist. Each to their own I suppose.

Brian Lara Cricket will be for all Amigas and we should have a full review soon. ■

Lisa Collins





Primal Rage

■ Price: £25.99 ■ Publisher: Time Warner Interactive © 0171 391 4300

A comet hits the planet and seven prehistoric monster demons are released from cryogenic storage ...





▲ You can eat the spectators for extra energy (if you know the move)! Fatalities are also available.

Remember the old TV show 'Tales of the Unexpected'? You know the one, the title sequence had really horrible fairground music and a zoetrope of naked womens' shadows dancing around in a disturbing manner. Anyway it freaked the hell out of me and so did Primal Rage when it arrived in the office. It was like a ghost from the past. I mean there were all those previews last year and then nothing ... a gameless void.

"When exactly are you going to release Primal Rage?" we would ask Time Warner. "We don't know, maybe never" was the answer. "Are you ever going to finish the game?", we would ask Probe, the developers. "We don't know, maybe never" was the answer. So we just forgot about it. All those next month pages wasted, but never mind, it's just paper after all.

And then Primal Rage just turned up one day. No pre publicity, no hoo-ha, no party ... in fact no instructions either. It took us three days to get these because Warner were so surprised themselves that the game had been finished, they only had one manual in the office.

Anyway, here it is. Four dinosaurs, two gigantic apes and a snake with legs are back from icy graves courtesy of a comet colliding with the planet and causing a an ecological disaster or something. Now they're attempting to take over the world.

The original coin-op was a pretty big success for Atari (of all people!) and the console versions were popular but there was always some doubts about the viability of the game on Amiga. The amount of animation frames had to be drastically reduced, the colours had to be drastically reduced, the whole thing had to work on 1Mb machines in ECS and AGA and it had to respond to a one button joystick. The plan was to cut it down by about 28Mb, with the animation frames going from 900 to 250 and colours from 64 to 8.

Now it's finished it still works on all Amigas – but you do need 2Mb of RAM. It will work with a single button joystick too, but you need to be pretty dextrous. What Probe have done is an amazing feat of squeezing and squashing, and rather than mincemeat coming up the other end we have a rather fine, if unconventional, beat 'em up. Of course Probe had already done conversions of Mortal Kombat 1 and 2 so they are pretty experienced in coin-op conversions. This is amply illustrated by the amount of special moves hidden in mind boggling, joystick juggling combinations.

Move your body

Punching is not an option for some of these creatures, but biting, head-butting, stomping tail flicking and kicking are. And each creature has about nine or ten different moves using a single firebutton press and various joystick directions. One special move is also listed in the manual and executed by tapping the fire button three times in succession, holding it down on the third press and then moving the stick itself in three or four directions. For example Vertigo, the snake-demon, has a special move called the Venom Spit. After you've pressed the fire button and held it down to activate the special move mode a towards, towards, away combination with the stick will make her spit. And she will continue to do so with a little bit of encouragement.

However, those cunning so and sos at Probe have hidden any amount of other special moves in this mode too, and haven't troubled us with an explanation of them in the manual. As I write I've found four other special moves for Vertigo, using three and even four combinations of directional move-

Special moves

The regular moves of most characters are a bit crap really. But to start off with that's all you've got. These special moves are listed in the manual, but there are at least two others for each of the creatures.



Diablo: Torch
This is actually a very dodgy special move. It looks good but has very little range or effect.



Sauron: Primal Scream
Ideal for those moments when the opposition chooses to jump at you. Short range but good.



Vertigo: Venom Spit
The fast version is better than the slow one mentioned in the manual. Easy to repeat.



Chaos: Power Puke
The most entertaining special move of all. This is effective and accompanied by a super sample.



Blizzard: Freeze Breath
Annoys your opponent no end. This move freezes them, enabling you to give your best shot.



Armadon: Iron Maiden
The Ace Of Spades, The Ace Of Spades!!! Armadon jumps up and spikes the enemy.

Talon: Brain Basher
This little chappie is very fast but unfortunately his listed special move is about as useful as a fly-swot on a rhinoceros. When using Talon it is advisable to keep on the move all the time, wearing down the opposition with the number of hits rather than their power.





▲ Talon takes a chomp out of Vertigo's neck. The walnut-like objects are brains.

ments on the stick. How many moves are hidden? I don't know yet and I haven't asked Probe because it's more fun finding them. I also feel a tips page is in order next month.

The fact that these moves are hidden makes Primal Rage a bit disappointing to start off with. The first couple of games are dull, as you get used to the limited kicking and punching abilities of the characters and don't yet have the benefit of more than one special move. Especially if the last time you played Primal Rage was at the arcade, you'll be less than impressed with the overall smoothness of the animation and graphics too. But once you've mastered the art of special moves and appreciate that this is not an Atari coin-op machine, things brighten up considerably: it's an Amiga and Primal Rage should probably never have been possible on it.

By day two I was much more impressed with Primal Rage. What has been done by the programmer, Richard Costello, is marvellous. The backgrounds are all convincingly well drawn and although the creatures themselves lack precise detail and colour, this gives them speed which would have been unobtainable otherwise. With the music cranked up, a fastish processor (which helps loading as well as playability) and a photographic memory for joystick movements it turns into an enjoyable beat 'em up. It's not MKII though.

Options

Primal Rage can be as easy or as difficult as you like, thanks to a wealth of options at your command. There are no less than 16 difficulty levels, so even wimps can compete, though it must be said that anything less than level 10 will give you the wrong impression of the game – that it's too easy. The easy levels are the best way to learn ALL of your character's special moves and defensive routines, because beyond level 10 the computer opponents get serious, ducking and avoiding your best hits, learning your regular moves and putting up a constant barrage of death blows and their own special moves.

Just in case you want to cheat or make things more difficult for you or a friend there is also a Damage Modifier option. This allows you to increase your own hitting power to 150% or decrease it to 50% which makes you more vulnerable. Having problems with a friend who always beats you? While they're in the loo increase your power to maximum and decrease theirs to 50%. Hey presto, things are more even.





The round time can also be varied between 30 and 80 seconds and the number of rounds from one to best of seven. The amount of credits can also be varied and for those times when younger children are around you can switch the Gore on or off.

Sound advice

While the sound effects are pretty weedy (except for the Power Puke), the music is superb, though it doesn't get enough exposure in my opinion, for some reason (presumably because of memory restrictions) it's exciting on the loading screens but a bit sad during play. Checking out the music test option reveals 24 tunes and although some are repetitive and others resemble (far too closely for those who hate Smoke On The Water) rock classics. It's a pity that it doesn't cut the mustard while the game is playing .

Primal Rage went from around 55% to 65% to 75% over the course of a two-day session but I finally had to call a halt at 80%. The conversion is superb, considering that the savings which had to be made are of NHS proportions and the quality of the backgrounds has to be seen to be believed. Likewise the wealth of game-extending options and the, at first frustrating, hidden special moves give it an extra edge. It was developed from the Megadrive version of the game and it plays almost as fluidly, but ultimately it lacks the one-on-one excitement and presence of its fellow Probe conversion, MKII. ■

Alan Dykes

PRIMAL RAGE

workbench version	2.0+
number of disks	4
RAM	2Mb
hard disk installable	No

A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

graphics	91%
sound	70%
lastability	82%
playability	80%

OVERALL
A dinosaur maybe, but not a bad one at all. **80%**


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Legends



■ **Price: £25.99** ■ **Publisher: Guildhall ✆ 01302 890 000**

Reviews pose many questions, eg: if Speris was Zelda, is this Zelda 2?



▲ Legends is a definite step above Speris and comes very close to Zelda. Worth spending some cash on.

We were not happy with Speris Legacy. It was a game that promised lots and delivered very little. Zelda was one of the NES's biggest hits and Speris had promised the same sort of action on Amiga, but instead there was a lot of anti climax and frustrating boredom built into the game. Pity. Then someone remembered Legends. In 1995 a nice man from Krisalis turned up with a preview version of this game, wondering what we thought of it. Did it have potential? We thought so. When would it be finished? He didn't know (this sounds so familiar).

The premise of the Zelda-style game is that a hero with a mission (rescue princess, free lands, destroy evil – that sort of thing) sets off on a voyage of discovery through different 'lands' or 'zones'. Picking up weapons along the way it ends up being a cross between a Commando style game and an adventure. Yes you have to shoot or beat things roundly about the head with swords and like but you also have to collect an inventory, talk to people and solve puzzles.



▲ The mediaeval level is a bit dark and blue and also gives you the opportunity to play a frog.

Legends fits all of the above criteria in a much more involving way than Speris. They have got the plot the right way around here and although the puzzles can be just as hard in Legends there is a lot more to do in between puzzles. Where Speris had you buzzing around like a fly in an empty bin, Legends gives you plenty of enemies to engage while you frantically try to find the next person to talk to, the next object to give to someone for a favour or the end of level baddie.

Bartering

Give someone an object for a favour? Yes, this game is all about trading too. To get something from the gardener in the mediaeval, for instance, you will have to engage him in conversation and discover that he isn't very happy because he has too many weeds. Then you search for some weedkiller, bring it back to him and weed the garden for him, after which he will surrender what you need. While you're weeding the garden you've got a double edged opportunity: to kill or be killed. Basically, while you're trying to weed the garden some nasty ghosts are trying to kill you. Like all other creatures in the game if you manage to kill them first though you can get more life yourself. As they die they surrender hearts, you can pick these up.

Ooops

Life is a precious thing in Legends. You have a certain number of continues, but there is no facility to save a game in the middle of a level, which is frustrating. One of Legends' great advantages is that you have four worlds to explore; North American, Egypt, Mediaeval and China and an additional Space Ship level. This provides major variety in terms of gameplay but it also means that once you're used to the enemies in one world everything changes in the next one and you start getting killed too easily. I was sceptical about the loading time too, off floppy at least. It's supplied on six disks and takes a couple of minutes to get running. This makes going back to disk one and the start again tedious.

Another annoying point about Legends is that the weapons are a bit weedy and the enemies are too persistent at times. This means that you can spend far too long high-tailing it out of situations without having enough chance to stand and fight, which I always find most enjoyable. Perhaps a way around this would have been to allow the enemies to yield more life power when killed.



▲ Legends features lots of unusual sub-games and mazes to spice things up.

This is a step above Speris, and those who have been searching for Zelda on an A1200 or A4000 need look no further. With various sub games, mazes and the like there is a lot of gameplay in here, and even though the various attempts at humour seem to fall flat (on me at least) it's still a fun adventure. ■

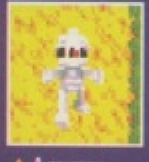
Alan Dykes

Meet the enemy

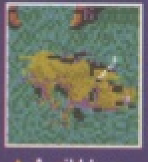
In the five time zones of the game you will meet hordes of enemies. The premise is that aliens have invaded Earth's past and future and are driving the inhabitants of each zone berserk. You play the nephew of a mad professor sent into the various time zones with a personality suiting each one. Your job? To stop the alien menace. These are the sort of thugs you'll meet ...



▲ An Egyptian phaeroah menace. Will follow you until you die.



▲ A mummy from Egypt. Will give chase and hit you regularly.



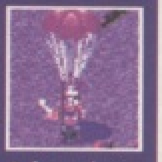
▲ A wild boar. These charge around goring people like you.



▲ A bloke with a big head. He spits fire and grimaces a lot.



▲ A mediaeval thug, yesterday. Not a pleasant sight on bridges.



▲ A parachuting knight!?! Unusual and very annoying.

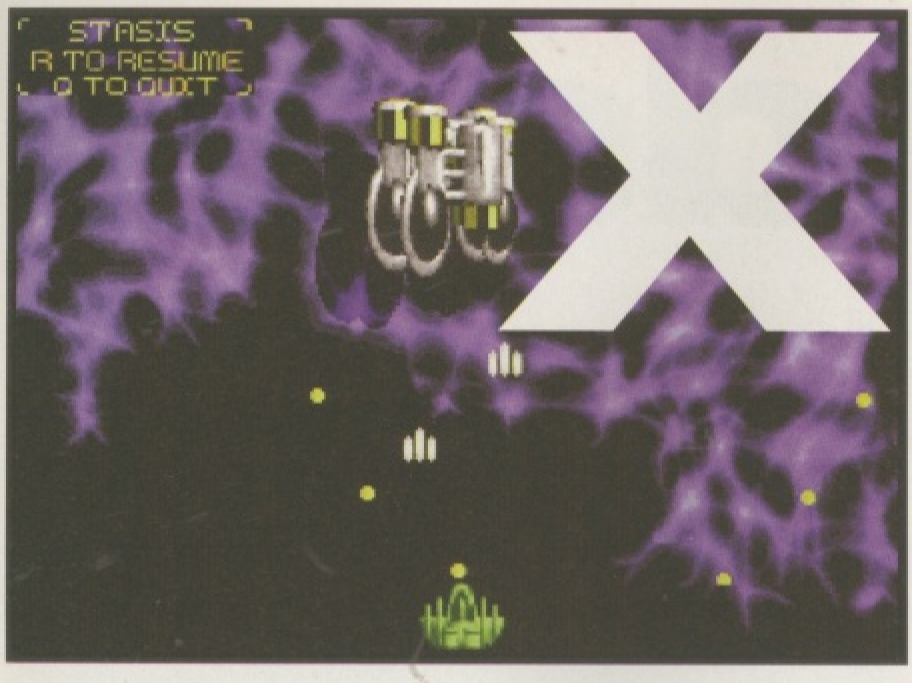
LEGENDS

■ workbench version	3+
■ number of disks	6
■ RAM	2Mb
■ hard disk installable	yes

A1200	
graphics	81%
sound	71%
lastability	88%
playability	83%

A4000

OVERALL
Almost like the real thing. A fun adventure. **81%**





XP8

■ Price: £19.99 ■ Publisher: Weathermine
✆ See boxout below

A cross between Banshee and Stardust. It must be good then?

XP8 arrived in a plastic bag with a small manual and four disks. It was sent to me by the producers and sellers of the game, Weathermine Software. They are an independent developer dedicated to Amiga and are determined to make a go of it themselves.

They've produced a vertical shoot 'em up that makes no pretences at originality. The story follows the discovery of an unknown alien probe in space. The craft sent to investigate mysteriously gets destroyed, and a space fighter (you) is quickly assigned to attack the aliens.

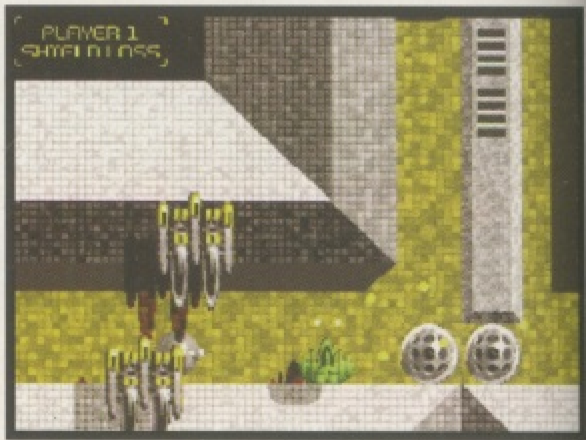
According to Weathermine there are five huge, sprawling, vertically scrolling levels with normal and combined two-player modes, featuring morphing ships and over 50 intelligent, ray-traced enemy ships. This sounds all very interesting but isn't that the standard we expect for shoot 'em ups in the nineties? The blurb continues by mentioning 128 colours, true-colour shadows and 50-frames per second update. This all sounds hunky-dorey, but is the gameplay really that good?

Weathermine draw inspiration from Core Design's lovely Banshee and the frantic but magnificent Swiv. Both of which are two of the best examples of classic Amiga vertical shoot 'em ups. Weathermine themselves told me "It's basically Banshee with sugared Stardust on top" Which would be fine were I about to eat it, but I'm not.

You've got to have an AGA machine to play XP8 although Weathermine tell me that they are currently beavering away on a version that will work on non-AGA machines with 1Mb. Fast scrolling has never really been a problem for an Amiga – and it's smooth on this game. XP8, like Stardust benefits from the use of ray-traced graphics and it looks like a bit of imagination has gone into the game design and features. I like the fact that you can play two players simultaneously and even jump on your mate's back by morphing your two ships together! And blow me down if the screen doesn't shake too as you take-out the bigger ships.

Power ups

Some ships carry power-ups for you to use and there are eight fiendishly disruptive weapons available too. You can change the weapon or power up by shooting the icon released by exploding ships. As well as the danger posed by alien craft there are also stray meteors, cannon armed turrets, walls and other obstacles that you can crash into. There are also massive end-of-level ships that are so big and zippy, they'll eat you and spit you out without a second thought – unless you're any good that is. The playing screen extends left and right just like Banshee and Swiv, giving you twice the playing area and this is very helpful for avoiding head-on collisions.



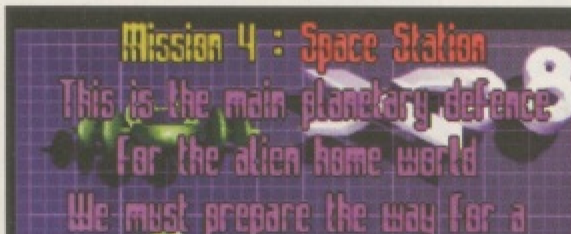
It's hard to improve on the old classics in this genre, and to find a shoot 'em up that is original these days is no mean feat. XP8 is good but sometimes it just gets too hot for its own good. Even though the screen extends, there's still almost too much going on at times and it's difficult to judge where you're at, especially in two-player mode. It's also too samey in the playability stakes – and there is definitely room for improvement here if a sequel (XP16 perhaps) is planned.

Oh joy! ... pad

It's hard-disk installable and you can opt to use a joypad if you wish: instead of smashing your spacebar to smithereens because you wanted to change weapons you just press the relevant button. The music in the game is, to say the very least, unusual for a shoot 'em up. It just lacks the sort of atmosphere needed to create real excitement in the game.

This two-man team has to be congratulated in producing a good, competent shoot 'em up. The Amiga needs people like this and it shows that there is a lot of talent out there. But they are selling it for £19.99, which might represent a necessary living wage for a small company, but is still a bit overblown for what the game offers. If it was half the price it would warrant a mark in the mid eighties. As a shareware title it would be up there in the nineties, such is its appeal. But it's just not a full price type of game: it only imitates one. In the final analysis XP8 won't set the world alight but if you're looking for something more creative and challenging than current PD offerings then check it out. It's still the best new game of its type about.■

Mark Forbes



▲ Presentation is a definite strong point of XP8. Very professional.

If you want to purchase XP8 then contact:
Weathermine Software,
50 Taleforth Road,
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XP8

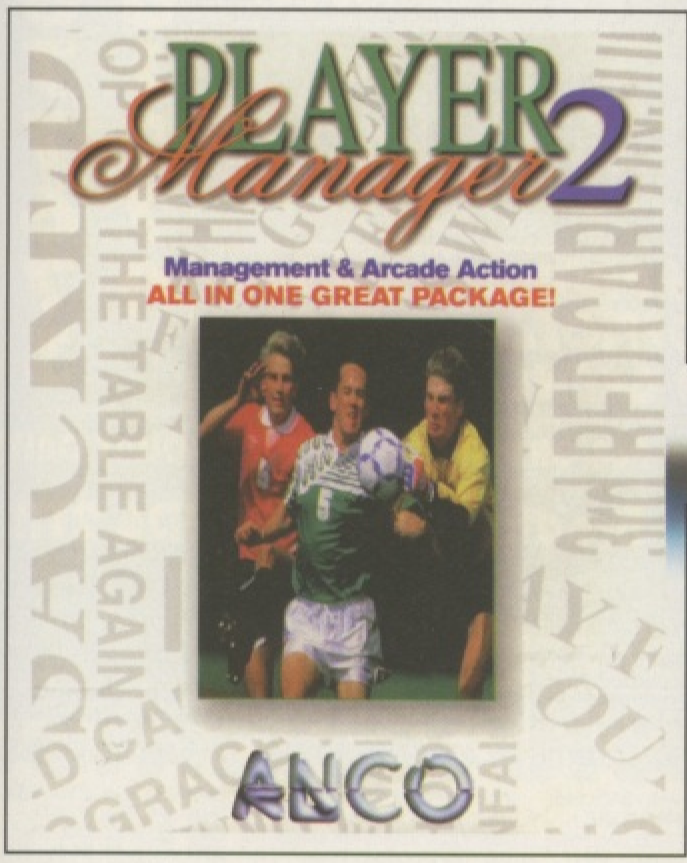
A500 · A500+ · A600 · **A1200** · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · **A4000**

■ workbench version	3.0
■ number of disks	4
■ RAM	2 MEG
■ hard disk installable	Yes

graphics	84%
sound	67%
lastability	79%
playability	70%

OVERALL
Has its moments but is a bit too repetitive. **72%**

Book 'em, sack 'em and sell 'em.



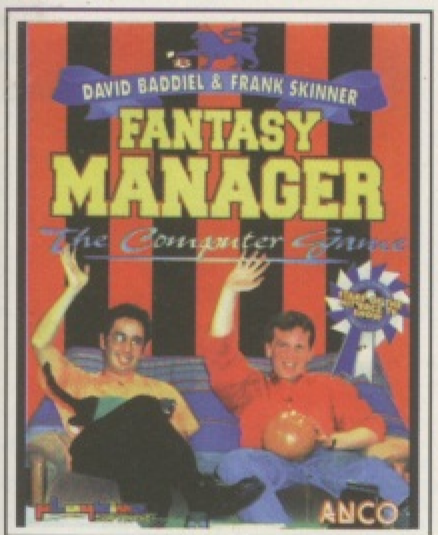
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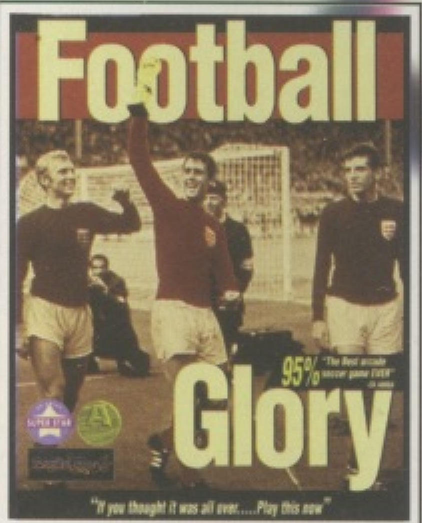
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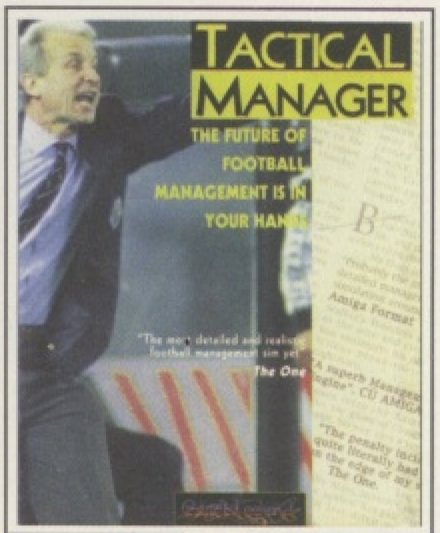
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Sensible World of Soccer

95/96 European Championship Edition

AMIGA SUPERSTAR

■ **Price: £19.99** ■ **Publisher: Time Warner © 0171 391 4300**

As one of the best selling Amiga games ever Sensible World Of Soccer takes some beating. I've seen grown men reduced to gibbering wrecks if they haven't played Sensi for a day or so. I've seen fights break out over a last minute vicious tackle in a sensitive competition scenario. Tears, laughs, sore hands and bleary eyes: Sensi is the culprit. It's also responsible for burning a hole in people's pockets though.

European Championship Edition is the fifth 'major' update to the Sensi format and you've got to start wondering just when they're going to come out with something actually new. I've put 'major' in inverted commas because this is not actually a dramatically changed version of SWOS at all. The game engine itself remains exactly the same as SWOS 95/96, the box gets a big 'Special Edition' badge and the manual has been reprinted



▲ **No dramatic changes here but it's still the best when it comes to footy games.**

with the European Championships logo, but that's nearly it. The changes are, in effect, merely cosmetic. Sensi's statistician has gone in and updated the teams, and when you enter the European Championship mode the current roster of teams in the summer '96 competition appears but this is, make no mistake, SWOS 95/96 and with a little effort you could have made up this competition yourself.

I'm not complaining about SWOS 95/96 at all. It's still the best soccer game available, not just on Amiga, but on any other games machine too. The 95/96 version, more than even the original updated (and bugged to hell) SWOS, stands up as the definitive game, with increased management elements (never boring though) additional features and more crowd atmosphere.

My first impression was to mark this down because we've seen it all before – a minor update sold as a marketing exercise. But that would be doing it a disservice. Sensi is brilliant and nothing can take that away from it. However, if you've already got SWOS 95/96 don't bother with this update unless you're trying to complete a Sensible World of Soccer collection or something. It'll drive you mad to spend £20 and discover that there's damn all difference between it and the one you bought at Christmas. If you still haven't upgraded from the first Sensi or indeed the first SWOS, then this is the most up-to-date version you can get, and if you're still a fan then you'd be mad not to get it. ■

Martin Davies

92 %

Wembley International Soccer

■ **Price: £19.99** ■ **Publisher: Audiogenic © 0181 424 2244**

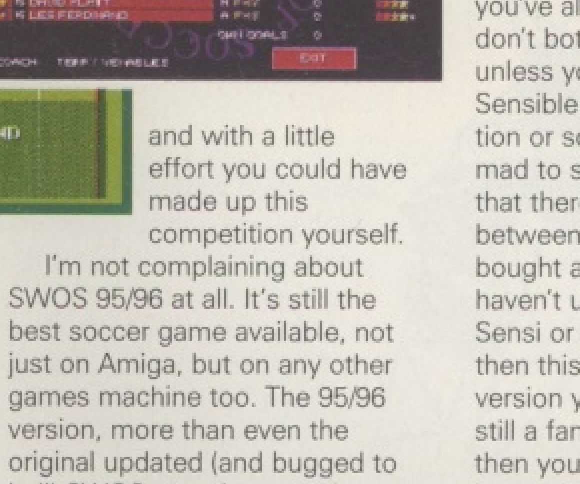
The AGA version of Wembley International Soccer was released nearly two years ago around World Cup time. It featured few innovations but bore up as a solid if uninspiring little football game. Heaven knows how it's taken them this long to cut it down to one disk and 1Mb Amiga compatibility, but it has and my opinion still hasn't changed much.

It's a neat, uncomplicated game. The menu screen is simple to use, though if you're used to other arcade football games like Sensi, FIFA and Total where the joystick reigns supreme, the fact that you have to use a mouse to access menus and then switch to a joystick seems a bit bothersome. However it's a game that's easy to get into without ever reading the (small) manual and considering the fact that you can switch between six referees, adjust the wind between none, light, medium and strong and play on five surfaces,



from astroturf to muddy, skimming through the options takes no time at all.

There are 24 teams including USA, Bulgaria, Saudi Arabia and Russia, but, unlike the old AGA version (where 48 international teams were available) England, Scotland or Wales are not included. Bizarre! You can elect to play in a friendly game or the World Cup and there are practice options, the option to equalise skills between players and 10 skill



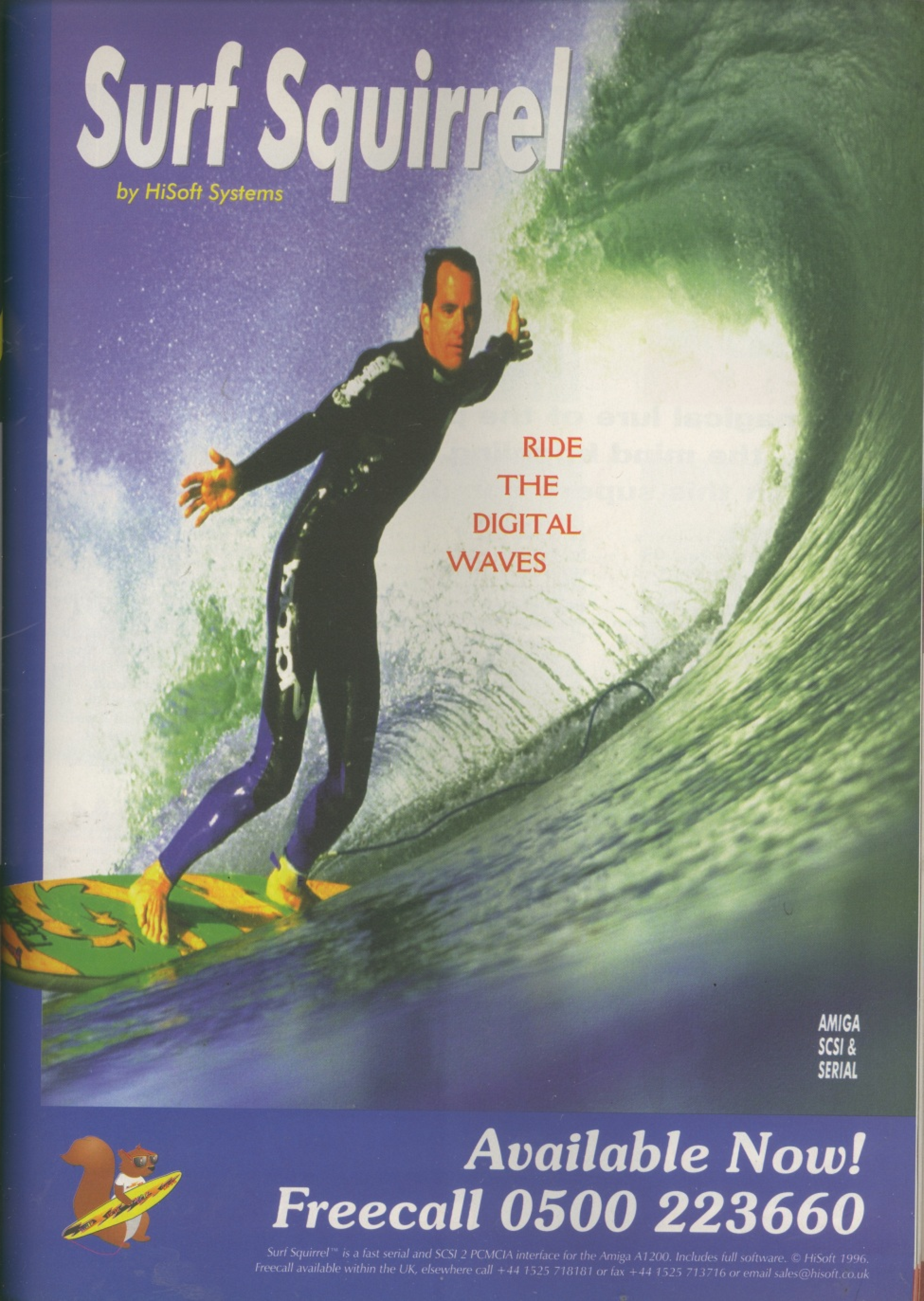
▲ **The new all Amiga version is a good effort but it doesn't hold up well against the competition.**

(or frustration depending how you look at it) levels to help you play the game.

Once you start the player animations are actually really cool, if a little jerky. Also, the control method is straightforward and you don't need a degree in finger dexterity to complete any of the plays. An arrow points in the direction you will shoot should you press the fire button and when not in control of the ball clicking on the fire button quickly puts you in charge of the nearest player. Passing is not difficult, but it's punctuated by little bleeps which signify that you can pass to a player – these are an odd addition. Overall Wembley Soccer has gone down a grade since I last saw it. This has very little to do with the game itself, after all it hasn't changed much. It's more to do with the level of competition. The aforementioned Total Football, FIFA and Sensible World Of Soccer 95/96 have all been released since and poor old Wembley just can't compete at all. ■

Martin Davies

69 %



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pinball madness

The magical lure of the pinball table, the flashing lights, the mind boggling scores, it could all be yours in this superb competition ...

Slamtilt is so good it's driven us around the bend for the last two months. Even our design department has been captivated. We can't get Helen Danby to do any work, such is her desire to beat everyone else on the team (and anyone else in the building willing to take her on). It's nice to see the Nintendo and Playstation bods eating humble pie and becoming addicted to an Amiga game too instead of slagging us off for not having any. Anyway exacting revenge by beating them up in the alleyway after work is getting a bit boring. So now we exact revenge by thrashing them at Slamtilt.

And so, to celebrate its popularity 21st Century are giving five lucky readers the chance to win a piece of history: the complete 21st Century Amiga pinball collection.

21st Century's success has rested on five now-famous pinball games: Pinball Dreams, Pinball Fantasies, Pinball Illusions, Pinball Mania and Slamtilt. The first three were by the utterly fab Digital Illusions, Mania (less accomplished than the others but still bundled with the Amiga Magic pack) was by newcomers Spidersoft and the latest (Slamtilt of course) by Liquid Dezign, who have taken Digital Illusions' torch and carried it into the stratosphere.



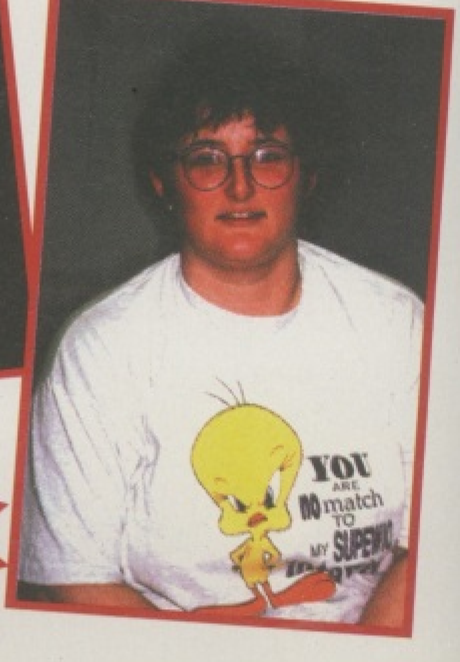
▲ Anthony Collins. Never gracious in defeat. "I would have beaten Helen if it was the Pirates table."



▼ Helen Danby. Not one bit gracious in triumph either. Our Art Editor has become obsessed by Slamtilt!

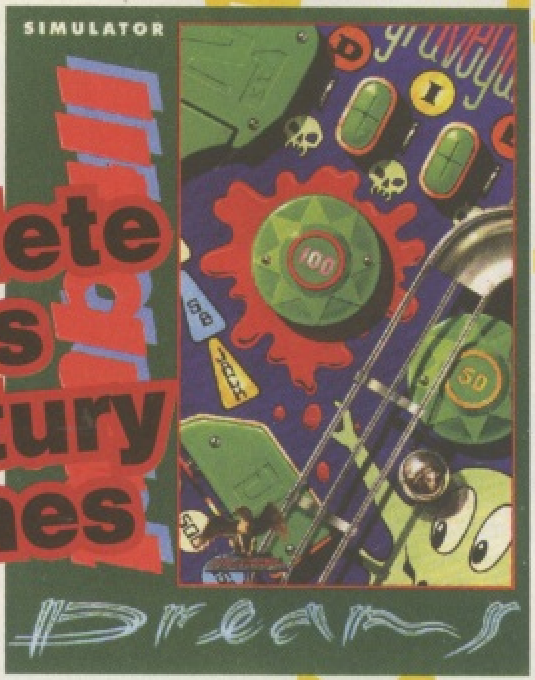


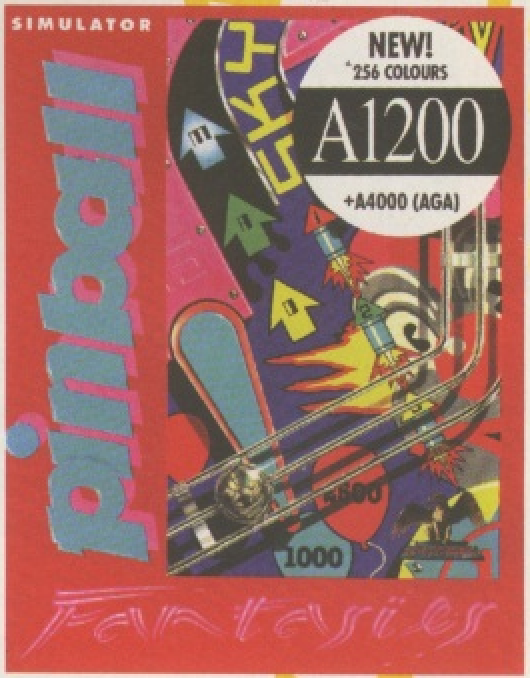
▲ Kelly Rogers: not happy with her performance on Slamtilt's Night Of Demons table. Maybe next time!

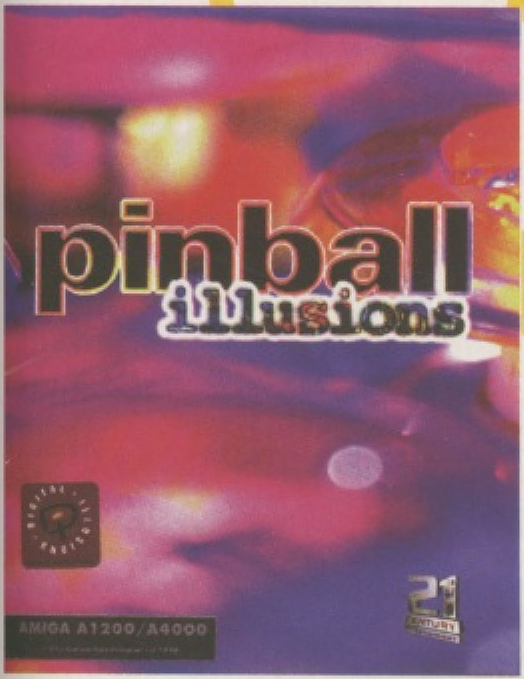


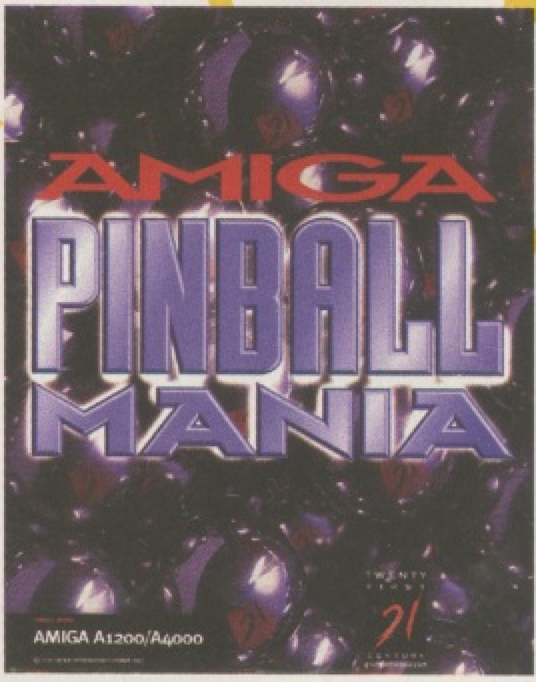
▼ Sarah-Jane Leavey. Revenge: "Danby, you don't stand a chance. I will defeat you! Oh yes."

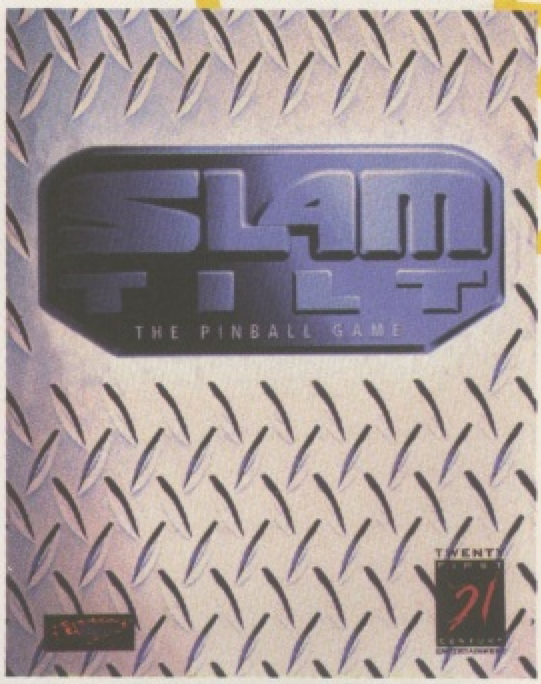
Win one of five complete collections of 21st Century pinball games











How to win:

So you fancy a total of 19 original Pinball tables then? Got an A1200 or A4000 eh? (only Dreams will work on non-AGA Amigas.) Then answer the following pinball-type questions and send them to: Pinball Madness, CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Answers on the back of a postcard please.

RULES
No employees of EMAP Images or 21st Century may enter. Only one entry per person and all entries must be on a postcard. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Closing date is 15/7/96.

A Which of these are in Slamtilt?

1. NIght of Demons
2. Flight of Fancy
3. Pirates
4. Babewatch

B Who programmed Slamtilt?

1. Spidersoft
2. Digital Illusions
3. Liquid Dezign
4. Digital Fantasies

C Who wrote Pinball Wizard?

1. Tommy Steele
2. Pete Townsend
3. Roger Daltry
4. Keith Richards

Snip tips



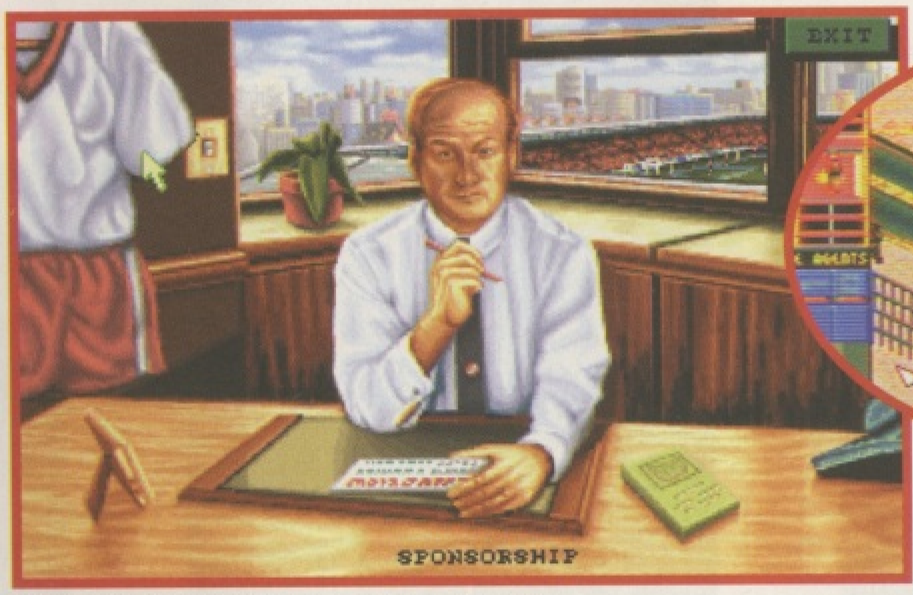


Once again we rip open games and chuckle in glee as their computerised intestines spill out across the floor. Don't forget – send in tips that get printed and you'll win a Hit Squad game for FREE!

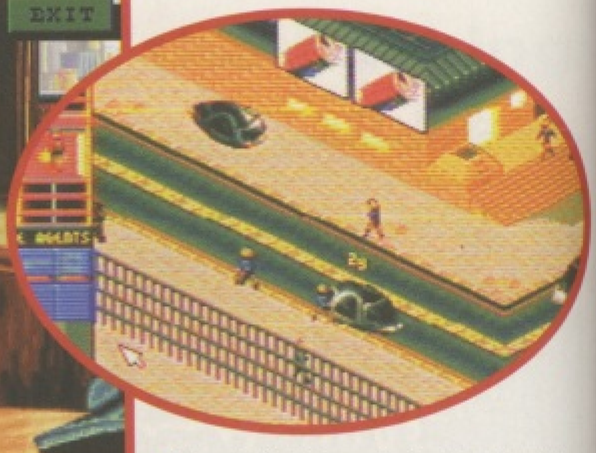
Ultimate Soccer Manager

Daze Marketing

Ta very much to Simon McCann from Cheshire for this little beauty. Should you find yourself with a load of players but no cash, go to the transfer list on the fax machine and sell the player at the bottom of your listing using the Fast Sell option. On the screen a highlighted space with no name will appear. Go back to the Fast Sell and sell as many times as you want. You will get more money each time you do this.



▲ Find out how to get loadsa money in Ultimate Soccer Manager.



▲ Leaving Syndicate running for a long, long time produces some surprising results. Try it and see.

Syndicate

Bullfrog

A weird tip from David Knell of Southampton involves leaving the game for a long period (he suggests overnight!) on the map screen for more money. Suffice to say, I didn't check this tip out, because I just can't afford to do that kind of thing with my electricity bill. Of course, if mum and dad are paying …

Liberation

Mindscape

Thanks to a clever bloke, Martin Heidenreich of Tasmania (ooer worldwide readership) we have an interesting little cheat to play with. Click on a power point in the wall (to allow recharging) and then do the following while the power flows: quickly face away from the wall and select a cred-card from any backpack. Now (using the mouse) look down at the floor and, while still looking down, attempt to use the cred-card without looking up (ie hold the left mouse button on the down arrow to look down, hold the right button, then release the left one and repeatedly click it). After about ten or so mouse clicks you can release everything. Look up, then wait for the electricity to stop flowing. Pick up the cred-card in front of you and you'll find that it, as if by magic, still appears to be there. Keep picking 'them' up for tons of cash (as each collection will have the same amount as the cred-card did originally) and combine them in your backpack for dosh-a-plenty! I know it sounds tricky, but with a bit of practice it's money for nothing.

One more tip from the Martin-meister regards fighting police where, by hiding behind a door and closing it as they try to walk through it, you can flatten them with about three slams and they won't shoot as much as usual either!



▲ Tips galore for Alien Breed 3D this month thanks to a Mr Darren White.

Mega-lo-mania

Sensi

An old game I know but a fine one! Thanks to Toby Turner for the following codes …

BNYABDUNBY
COVCPMFVEBL
WKCCHIEVUKNI
EMODOXXHOJ
WWKD9PXDBZ
KUUCIOPL9HV
PEHAFBPKZAQ
GYJDJHPNFHN
TJLBVSNN19D

Alien Breed 3D

Team 17

Mr Darren White of Ipswich has gone one step further than the average punter – not only supplying tons of Alien Breed 3D codes, but explaining how they work. Crivens!

Level	Codes
1-The Gate	Er… the start.
2-Storage bay	CMOFFJENPPHHFFFF
3-Sewer Network	MIOOEDEOPPFFFFFF
4-The Courtyard	KPKOFOPOHOEHFFFF
5-System Purge	NLIAMBOOPHHFHFFN
6-The Mines	FOIINMPOCNFFFFFF
7-The Furnace	CCCGIDOPPFEEFFFF
8-Test Arena Gamma	PPKKNOPLJIEFMFEN
9-Surface Zone	DBAMHFPPABEFIFFN
10-Training Area	JMCGDIOKPLFBDCGN
11-Admin Block	HKAMHHPPFFFFFFFF
12-The Pit	DPIOCKPPEEEBFFFF
13-Strata	OLKOLEOOAPELAIHP
14-Reactor Core	GGAOLMOOMNMILKHJ
15-Cooling Tower	LKKOPHPPAIOJBIOH

Replace the last eight letters of any code with EEEEDCGN or replace the last four with AIHP or replace the last two with OO to (in most cases) raise your level of fire power as well as to sort out your vitality level.

Also, having found things a bit tough when confronting the final alien in the Test Arena Gamma Level 1, young Darren found an easier way to approach things: kill all the aliens up to the point when the alien captured within the large white box in the middle or the arena is freed, and then run as fast as you can back to the first arena and make your way up onto the balcony where the alien is. There you can crouch down and position yourself at the back edge of the balcony and then have a nice cup of tea while the alien bombs itself to death. Hurrah! Nice one Daz! ■

And that's your lot! Don't forget to keep 'em coming in and thanks to those groovy funksters at Ocean there's a Hit Squad game for every tip printed. Ta-ra!



Adventure Helpline

Men may know how to play the game but here's a girl who knows the score. **Vamp** – the Dark Huntress – is here to sink her pretty ivories into some more of your RPG problems.

Dungeon Master 2

Please can you help out a 65 year old wrinkly who is about to lose his marbles? (I've already lost my hair.) I'm stuck in DM2. I have all four Clan Sections and have managed to get past the Keep door. However, once inside the entrance, I cannot find a way of getting past the three portcullis gates that block the way into the Keep. All my efforts using the three buttons in the alcove fail miserably.

Bert, Cramlington.

That's all I need, a sugar daddy who is losing his marbles. If you really loved me you would have sold your home and sent me all the money wrapped in your bus pass. I should warn you that there are no chair lifts in the castle.

To open the three gates in the entrance hall you must turn to face the three wall switches. Quickly press the three buttons in the sequence – left, right, centre, and then run backwards through the three gates.

To enable you to move quickly enough you must either remove all heavy objects from your party, or cast the agility spell (OH IR ROS). Of course things can get very difficult when you're trying to run backwards and manoeuvre a zimmer frame at the same time, so be careful.

Operation Stealth

I know I have to get the red carnation and sit on the bench in the park with it so I can meet my contact but I cannot remember what to do to get it.

Andrew Gwynne, Legbourne.

There's nothing too difficult in the first part of the game. Enter the Bank and use the notes on the teller (twice). Leave the Bank and go east twice. Enter the Florist and use the coins on the Florist. Take the carnation and use it on John. Go up, west, west and save game. Sit on the bench and when the agent gets shot, quickly take the key and card and leave the park.

Cruise for a Corpse

I am stuck at 12:00. In my inventory I have: a thank you note, a key, a Cartier receipt, a prescription, an engagement invitation, a bottle of whisky, and a glass.

Michael Ward, Amesbury.

By now you should have been to the laundry and searched the basket to find a bathrobe with a necklace inside the pocket. Open the necklace and look at the picture. Now talk to everyone about the necklace. You should give a drink to Suzanne and then talk to her. When dealing with women you should remember the old motto, 'Sweets are slicker, but liquor's quicker!'

I should warn you that there are a couple of bugs in this game; one of which is caused by using the 'map jump facility'. Always walk between locations; it takes longer, but it won't mess up the game.

Monkey Island 2

I have three questions for you about this game:

1. How do you get the Near-Grog drink on Booty Island?
2. How do you get to the key in Le Chuck's Fortress?
3. How do I get Guy to open the coffin to get another map piece?

Kevin Gilson, Isle of Sheppey.

To win the drinking competition you must wait until the pirate leaves you alone with your drink, then use your drink on the tree. Now use the Near-Grog with your empty mug.

First go to Booty Island and to Stan's Funerals. Talk with him and seal him in the coffin with a hammer and nails. Take the Crypt key. Go to Scabb Island, to the Crypt in the Cemetery. Use the book of Pirate Quotations to find out which coffin is that of Rapp Scallion. Now you can open the coffin and take some ashes. You'll now need to go and see the Voodoo Lady.

The route to the key in Le Chuck's Fortress is found by using the directions in the skeleton's song. You'll start by going to the right, back tunnel. The first door is the first exit.

Simon the Sorcerer

Could you tell me how to get the Sousaphone? How do I wake the sleeping giant, and how do I cross the loose plank under the Swampling's House?

No name or address supplied.

After you pour water on the idiot's beans, you can pick the beans up from the puddle. Take the beans to the compost heap behind the wizard's house and by planting them you'll get the answer to the Sousaphone problem.

The answer to the loose plank is contained in another of my wise sayings, "When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping".

You can buy a hammer (plus a free nail from the shop). You'll get money to go shopping by selling a gem to the dodgy geezer in the village square. If you haven't got a gem, then it's time you went mining with the dwarves.

Bloodnet

How do I get the Multichannel Transmitter from the Icon Robber's Studio without any bloodshed?

Robert Flemming, Woking.

Spoilsport! It's no fun without any blood being shed. If you must do things the easy way then I suggest you use the Somnavapor. Now search the room and take the Holocam, the Holofilms and the Transmitter.

Monkey Island 1

How do I get bananas off the trees to give to the monkey?

Mathew Collins, Leicester.

Take a rock and place it at the edge of the cliff. Go to the piece of primitive art and pull it twice to alter the aim of the falling rock. The bananas you'll get, plus those from the bowl of fruit in the village will be enough to make the monkey follow you. ■

If you've got a little problem with your favourite Role Playing Game and would like Vamp to help you out, drop her a line at CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



IT'S GOING TO BE FUN TO SEE HOW LONG THE MEEK CAN KEEP THE EARTH AFTER THEY INHERIT IT.

CDROM BASED

* Special offer or sale price

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CD028B	FONTS & CLIPART	£9.99
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CD034	ASSASSINS GAMES	£9.99
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CD042	W.SCIENCE CLIPART	* £7.99
CD043	W.SCIENCE FONTS	* £7.99
CD044	SOUND TERRIFIC	£19.99
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CD060	HOTTEST 4	£7.99
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CD072	ADULT SENSATIONS	£17.99
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CD098	W/S ANIMS	£17.99
CD099	LSD TOOLS 2	£19.99
CD103	FRESH FONTS 2	£19.99
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CD115	FRED FISH TEXTURES	£39.99
CD117	CD BOOT V2.0	£24.99
CD141	THE LIGHT WORKS	£19.99
CD143	TETRA SOUNDS	* £4.99
CD147	CD WRITE	£44.99
CD156	MAGIC ILLUSIONS	£7.99
CD165	GATEWAY	* £7.99
CD168	UFO SET 1	* £24.99
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CD291	WORLD OF SOUND	* £4.99
CD293	AMINET 11	£12.99

* Double check prices when ordering as many of the above are Special Discounts

HARDWARE

*** Internal 6 speed Commodore Branded IDE CD Drive with IDE-Fix (registered ver).**
*** £75 |Commodore 6 speed CDRom Drive**
*** £50 for software ide-fix (shware version of the software is also avaible for free with any cdrom or cdrom drive purchades).**
*** 540Mb 2.5inch hard drives £130 including install software & internal connection lead.**
*** Come down to our NEW shop show/room & collect your h/ware open 6 days a week.**

PROGRAM + TEK

^+ V0298NORTHC V1.3 (AB)
The latest update on the public domain 'C' environment for the Amiga that I am aware of.

^+ V0523DICE C COMPILER (AB)
Contains Matthew Dillons full featured, powerful C compiler and environment system.

^+ V0786PASCAL
Contains everything needed to program in Pascal. Includes A68k 68000 assembler. Blink, Linking software and PCQ, a modest Pascal sub set compiler a

^* V1041DIGITAL BREAD BOARD
is a full GUI digital logic circuit simulator. Digital Breadboard currently supports 2 and 3 input etc

^+ V1056DEVELOPER
Contains the official Commodore developers kits for the Amiga Guide and Commodore Install utilities.

^+ V1060CIRCUIT BOARD DESIGN
Several terrific routines for the electronic enthusiast. Includes PCBtool, a circuit board design tool.

^+ V1209GNU C++ COMPILER (3) [HD]
Theses disks consists of the latest version of the GCC environment. Thus the compiler, driver, assembler, linker, header files inline code generation of library calls.

^+ V1213PROGRAM LANGUAGES
ACE v1.02, is a PD Amiga BASIC compiler which, in conjunction with A68K & Blink produces stand alone executable's. run time shared libraries are required.

^* V1227GAD TOOLS V2.2C
A standard Amiga shared routine library which makes it a lot quicker / easier to build standard requesters into programs. Designed with CBM's guidelines in mind.

^+ V1384HOW TO CODE IN C (AB)
Coves Debugging, Intuition and Graphic, Kodbibliotek, Tips & Tricks, Aeropa AsmProC, Dos Intuition, WB start, DMake, GadToolsBox and Power Source.

^+ V1430N.D.U.K V37 (ABCD)
Portions of the Commodore Native Developer Update Kit that can be licensed for distribution. Includes the fd files, libraries, startups, C include files, and tools

^+ V1905MATHS FORMULA EDIT V2.1
MathScript is a formula editor, which is used to integrate mathematical formulas into word processors or DTP programs. It has an extensive amount of mathematical and physical symbols and many control codes for creating fractions,roots, exponents.

^+ V1909REQCHANGE V3.6
Patches Intuition, ASL, ARP & REQ to use the Req Tools requesters instead. It also adds a couple of extra features, like an Assign Wedge, the possibility to send ARexx commands when a patched requester appears, & several options to configure how the patches behave.

^+ V1919MOTOROLA CROSS ASSEMBLERS V2.0
Assembler's AS0,1,4,5,9,11

UTILS & POPULAR

^+ V1362CHECKERS TOOLBOX
Incredible Amiga diagnosis program. Runs self test on all chips, all the ports and even the disk drive! All your hardware is tested and displayed in graphical information. Every Amiga owner should have a copy! Find out what is wrong with your Amiga before going to the repairer to get it fixed. It may save you a bob or two!

^+ V1405VIRTUAL UTILITIES
Contains 5 utils containing everything needed for any Amiga user to make virtual memory from their harddrive. The Amiga is fooled into thinking it has massive amounts of RAM when really it only has a small amount mapped to a file on the harddrive.

^+ V1719TELETEXT V2.3
View Teletext (also know as Teletekst, Videotext, Ceefax, Skytext, Supertext etc.) on your Amiga. It is suitable for any PAL Amiga (read @{ System requirements link systems req } for more info, because it uses the parallel port to interface with the hardware. An electronic switch is provided to easily switch between the TeleText decoder and a printer.

^^ V1335LIBRARIES & DATATYPES
This is a disk packed full of Amiga Workbench 3.0 Libraries and Datatypes, There's 47 Libraries from A to Z all libraries covered are right up to date and waiting to be installed. The disk also have installation notes to aid the beginners. also files in the L and Devs/DosDrivers drawers that can be copied or assigned.

^+ V1641SUPER KILLERS V10.0
The latest collection of virus killers like AntiCicloVir v2.2a, Virus Checker v6.43, VirusZ II v1.07, and VT v2.67, Req the use of LHA which is in the c directory.

^* V1017POST V1.86ENH (ABC)
PostScript interpreter which implements the full Adobe language. Supports Adobe type 1 and type 3 fonts, screen output, file output, and printer output.

^+ V1593EPU DISK STAKKER V1.7
Double your hard drive capacity by installing EPU. After installing EPU to any Device (HardDisk, Floppy, Rad etc) every file which will be written to the device will be compressed & when any compressed file is read by any application it will be decompressed.

^* V1039HD INSTALLER (AB)
Bought an A1200 machine and are having trouble with your hard drive why not install it correctly.

^* V1136DISKSALVE 2
Repair your hard drive with this. recommended.

^+ V1326C: COMMANDS & LIBS
The C: and LIBS disk contains over 100 commands lie within the C directory. Over 20 LIBRARY's are within the LIBS directory. Use them for your disks. They can be used to spice the disk up in appearance and in usage.

^+ V0490MESSY SID II
once loaded will read MS Dos disks, Convert any text (asc) files on to an Amiga dos disk so that they can be loaded into any standard Word processor. The program will also convert the text back to your IBM disks.

^+ V1611SNOOPDOS V3.0
Log's all the dos/library calls and more when you run a program. This is handy for both the programmer and the beginner. Have you ever installed a program to your harddrive and then discovered that it will not run without a certain library but you don't know which?

^+ V1926VIRUS WORKSHOP V4.8
This is the one and only Virus Workshop by Markus Schmall. Now in the Version 4.8. Test it!

^+ V0424ANTIFLICKER
A program to stop the Flickering when you use the Amiga in Hi res move.

^+ V1669TUDE V1.0
is a very extensive and easy way of degrading your machine for all sorts of purposes. It is useful for playing old game on A1200s for example which need kickstart 1.3. There is a GUI version included as well as a CLI. version so most people will have no trouble using it. A highly useful tool for all Amiga owners. Good.

^+ V1523RELOKICK V1.41
ANOTHER(!) version of ReloKick. Galahad of Dual Crew did ReloKick 1.4, so I decided to improve on that!

^+ V1356NOERRORS V1.3
Its main function is to hide physical disk errors from floppy disks and hard disks, so these disks can then be used without DOS showing read/write errors.

^+ V0662DCOPY V3.1
Best PD copier on the Amiga. No new Features over 2 but has been updated with new code information.

^^ V1164(AGA) ASA FIX DISK
An entire disk full of utilities for those A1200 and A4000 owners out there who can not for the life of them get some of there favourite games or demos to work.

^* V1360WB2.0 TUTORIAL
There is a lot more options open to you than just playing games. In the chapters Files Explained & Menus. attempt to explain the workings of WB2.as the manuals supplied with your Amiga.

^* V1242RE ORG V3.11
is a fast disk optimizer that can be used for floppy disks and hard disks. Supports new Kickstart 2.04 features including hard and soft links and High Density drives.

^+ V0685APRO ASTROLOGY V3.5
Astro_22 as released is a starter program which accurately calculates the position of the planets, cusps and zodiac positions to within 30 seconds of arc. I intend to increase the usefulness of the program to eventually cover all aspects of the subject which will appeal to professional as well as novice astrologers not wishing to pay 200+ for a decent package. Updated version

^+ V0489AMIBASE PRO II
This is the latest database program which is an update

^+ V0827REPAIR IT V2.01
An essential set of tools for recovery. Disk speed reports the speed of a selected drive. DiskSalv will try to recover as much data as possible from a corrupt disk. HDTool will install the OS3 disk caching and FFS to the hard drive of a lesser operating system.

^^ V1661NATIONAL LOTTERY
This is a national lottery prediction program called Lottery Winner. It consists of a database system which can record the National Lottery results from week to week until it has sufficient data to make certain types of predictions or just a random guess. Good.

^+ V1679COP THE LOT
Lottery prediction/database which can store the previous lottery results and also select random numbers etc.

^+ V1771COURSE FORM
Like to put a bit of money on the horses? This utility allows you to enter the figures for the horses in a particular race, plus the course details, and then it will try to predict the winner of the race. Good.

^+ V1778LOTTERY CHECKER
is a great tool for checking lottery numbers. Good for office syndicates. Find 'A' Date is a database which stores and matches people up for blind dates. Sneaker is used to view and change binary files, technical users are always finding these programs useful.

^* V1836MRBACKUP V2.1.4
is a hard disk backup program for the Commodore Amiga family of computers. It provides a wide range of services to support Amiga file management and backup/restore of files to/from hard disk.

^+ V1837DISK DOUBLING V1.9B
This package allows you to create virtual partitions pn your HD. Files stored in such partitions get automatically compressed and decompressed whenever you access them, in a transparent way.

^* V1838VMM V3.0
A virtual memory manager for Amigas with a 68040,68030 or 68020+68851 processor.

^+ V1932X-FILES GUIDE
The X-Files Guide disk is full of very usefull information if you are interested in the x-files. It contains over 674k worth of text, ranging from episodes 1 and 2 to the x-files transcript. It also has a survey you can fill in and send off to the author of the disk.

^+ V1949MORE HD INSTALLERS
This disk contains the latest installers for the following games: ABASE, Arnie 2, ATR, Bump 'n' Burn, Naughty-ones, Rise of the Robots, Sensible World of Soccer, Shadow Fighters, Lion King, MKII_PAFIX, Parasol Stars, Rock'n'Roll, Skimarks 2, Skeleton Krew, Super Stardust, SoftB3, Trolls and Uridium 2.

^+ V1963VIRUS WORKSHOP V5.1
This version of Virus Workshop is as good as any of the others or even better. You can check every single file on there own or all together. If it finds a virus it will tell you what it is and exactly what to do to get rid of it. This is probably the best version of Virus Workshop so far and well worth buying.

^+ V1965BALLS
Balls is yet another lottery predictor program. It is actually quite good apart from the £5 fee if you want to get the registered version. It can predict random numbers or numbers from pre-entered numbers of upto 72 weeks earlier. A well presented lottery predictor, if your into all the lottery hype get this.

^* V1969AQUARIUM SIMULATOR
3d Aquarium Simulator (uses MUI2.0). check it out.

^+ V1982SCOUT V2.1
Scout is a tool that allows you to monitor your computer system. It displays many different things like tasks, ports, assigns, expansion boards, resident commands, interrupts, etc.

^+ V1983DOPUS UTILS 2
This is the second selection of utilities for use with the most popular Amiga Disk utility Directory Opus.

^+ V1997LOTTERY PREDICTOR
Another lottery prediction system. This latest addition has a few added advantages over the other available. For a start this one uses intution fully so it multitasks and it uses only a small window on your workbench. Also it looks very nice! The added touch of the lottery symbol makes all the difference. The best lottery predictor yet.

^+ V1998AMIGADOS GUIDE V1.5
A very handy program for those who want to learn more about Amiga DOS or those who simply want an easy reference for commands etc.. The program consists of an easy to use point and click system with a index.

^+ V1999COP THE LOT PRO
Yet another lottery program. This one will only generate random numbers, there is no option to actually make any sort of calculated prediction. There is also a Numbers drawn database and a My guesses database to help you keep a record of the numbers you have been choosing.

^+ V2000BACK DOOR V6.0
This is the latest version of this now quite well known game cheat database. There are cheats and tips for hundreds of different games including a lot of recent titles. There are even long entries for games such as Dune II, which is a tactical game, detailling good methods of play

^+ V2001NATIONAL LOTTERY
This program is more than just a random number generator. It uses uses a special History formula with Chaos Theory to produce a more accurate prediction.

^+ V2004LOCKUP V4.0
is the newist version of the old utility Lockup which basically allows you to Lockup your hard drive with a password to enter and get it going again.

^+ V2005SHAPE SHIFTER 3.2
is a multitasking shareware Macintosh-2 emulator for the Amiga. It allows you to run mac software withour additional hardware. New updated version.

^+ V2014MESSY SID 3.0
this is the latest verion of which will read and write PC Floppy disks 720k or 1.44 if your drive can take it.

^+ V2015MOVIE MAKER 2.0 (AB)
have you ever wanted to create your own movie and see it flourish in the Oscars, then nows your chance.

^+ V2026ROUTE PLANNER
Highway trip planner. Requires MUI 2.2

^* V2061DOPUS 5 EXTRAS VOL 1 (AB)
This set of disks contains a selection of new archives for use with DOpus v5.0. ArcByName - Arc-scripe for Dopus5 and Lha/LZX V1.0. Dopus511 - Patch for Directory Opus 5.0 & 5.10 -> 5.11. DOpusLhARexx2 - Handles LhA archives from DOpus. DOpusReg - DOpusReg.lha: Opus 5.11 fix for AFS problems. DOpus_CleanRAM - DOpus AREXX script for cleaning ramdisk. LhALZXDirDOpus5 - Modified LhaDir.dopus5 to work with lzxdir.dopus5. player3_0opus5 - CDDA & soundplayers/saver for DirOpus5. xpkdopus - XPK support for DOpus5 (ARexx&Executable).

^* V2060GFFT SPECTRUM ANALYZER
GFFT Version 2.03 is the update to GFFT version 1.12. The GUI is improved considerably (allows any font and screen color setup, has progress indicator, uses tooltypes, etc.), more features are added, bugs are fixed, and a new SpectrumAnalysis.guide is included (with lots of pictures) to explain spectrum analysis.

^* V2072VIRUS_CHECKER V8.04
Best virus killer on the Amiga to date. Updated version with bug fixes and updated virus information.

MWB& W/B

^* V1043SUPER DARK V2.1A
A screen blanker with some special features. It is similar to the After Dark screen blanker in the PC and Mac worlds. Features include a lot of different screen effects, a screen locker, and more.2

^+ V1964COLOUR WORKBENCH
Allows you to basically change your workbench screen to purple or whatever colour you fancy. It also changes the font from the usual workbench one to one that is really small. There are icons which allow you to change the one's you already use to some they have. They have also included some backdrops for you to use.

^+ V1966STAR TREK BACKGROUNDS
Heres some new backgrounds for workbench all based around the Star trek T:N:G series.

^^ V2045ICONIAN v2.96
OS3.0 icon editor, NewIcon support.

^+ V2046CALC
Arbitrary precision calculator/language

^* V2053BLITZBANK V1.53 [1.5MB]
is a very powerful personal accounts system and is ABank compatible. 1.53 fixes two important buggs of the version 1.52 I couldn't wait for having new features because these buggs were really too annoying.

^+ V2061BERZBENCH V1.1C
Probably the best patterns for WB

^* V2062ICONOGRAPHICS V3.0
is a collection of eight colour icons for Workbench 2 and 3. All standard system icons are included, with many additional icons (PD/Shareware programs, different types of data, custom drawers, and ToolManager dock icons). This release includes about 350 high quality icons. Every icon contains an alternate image that is displayed when the icon is clicked on.

^^ V2063MWB IMAGEDRAWERS FULL COLLECTION
This is a full MWB image drawers' collection, I added 42 new drawers since the first release (MWBDrws_474). I was tired of wastin' time every time I was searchin' for a particular image drawer, so I collected all the drawers I found on Aminet in a single collection. I hope this could be useful to someone else, but if you still prefer searchin' through all Aminet files... good luck!!

^* V2064100 USELESS PATTERNS
102 background patterns in 2, 4, 8 and 16 colors.

^^ V2068JTE MAGICWB ICONS 5/6/7/8
JTE MagicWB Icons 5 - This package includes 90+ new MagicWB icons. JTE MagicWB Icons 6 - This package includes 37 new MagicWB icons, 1 WB pattern, 2 TMbrushes and 96 lame Pattern icons. JTE MagicWB Icons 7 - This package includes 60 new MagicWB icons. JTE MagicWB Icons 8 - This package includes 30+ new MagicWB icons.

^^ V2069NEW BREATHTAKING PATTERNS FOR MAGICWB
This package contains 11 photo-realistic backgrounds: Beach.png, BricksGrey.iff, Clouds.png, Confetti.iff, Mountains.png, Pebble.iff, Storm.iff, Stucco.iff, Terrace.png, Thunder.png, Valley.png. You need a PNG-datatype and a program to adjust the first 16 colors of your Workbench to the right colors.

^^ V2070MWB ICONS, PATTERNS
A collection of really nice MWB compatible stuff. Guide included.

PRO-SOFT

*** We have set up a Special Offer for you.**

If you want more details on any of the following disks or want information / prices for the registered versions ring PRO-SOFT on (0973) 702718.
(a) Each shareware version below comes with a £5.00 discount for the registered version.
(b) Each PRO-Soft disk can be purchased for £1.00 each or £4.00 for all 5 disks. (Please note our min order £10).
(c) Order over 20 normal PD-Soft disks and get all 5 Pro-Soft disks **"FREE-OF-CHARGE"**.

^+ V2073PRO-LOTTERY 96
Don't believe that lottery prediction is possible? Have a look at Pro-Lottery, and you might find that you begin to think otherwise! It DOESN'T pretend to guarantee you a jackpot win, but it does genuinely improve your chances of regular small-medium wins. Ideal for syndicates or individuals.

^+ V2074PRO-FOOTBALL
An extremely easy to use, yet powerful prediction system for use on both football pools and football fixed-odds. Evaluates each match, and presents you with the most likely outcome. (Amiga Shopper Star-Buy, Amiga Format Selection Of The Month)

^+ V2075PRO-GAMBLE v2.2
An easy to use, yet surprisingly accurate, horse race prediction system. Requires little racing knowledge - just any daily newspaper and 20 minutes! Generates predictions in a useable format (eg: Placepot), and can even calculate your winnings for you!

^+ V2076PRO-GREYHOUNDS
As Pro-Gamble, but for the dogs - Very user-friendly.

^+ V2077BOOKIE BEATER
Ever been unsure as to which selection in an event you should back? Bookie Beater allows you to bet on more than one, safe in the knowledge that you'll make the same profit no matter which one wins! Can be used for any 'bettable' event.

EMULATORS

!+ V0817A500 PLUS EMULATOR
Have amiga 500 and want workbench 2.0 then just install this disk onto your floppy 1.3 version of workbench or your HD for complete WB2 compatibility.

^* V1178KICKSTART 3 EMU
Kickstart 1.3/3.0 emulator and decibel patch program will give you the option to have kickstart 1.3 or 3.xias used in NEW Amigas) in your Amiga. This is much enhanced over the version that was given away free.

^+ V1336THE BBC EMULATOR
Contains commands to allow existing files to be transferred from a BBC with DFS by means of a serial cable.

^+ V1669MSDOS/AMIGADOS V2.3
This is a very interesting utility which should be useful to anyone who uses both PCs and Amigas. The tool allows you to create a directory on which you can store MSDOS commands and then they can be used through the shell as if they were AmigaDos commands. Great.

^^ V1868PC TASK V3.1
is the first and only software 80286 emulator for the Amiga range of computers. Transfer files between your Amiga and MSDOS. Compatible with MS Windows 3+

^^ V1931ZXAM v2.0
The latest Spectrum Emulator available. Basically it allows you to run Spectrum software on your Amiga. Requires the AGA chipset but does require WB3+ and a 68020 CPU or better

^* V2059FRODO V2.0
Frodo is a multitasking freeware C64 emu for the Amiga. OS2.1 and a 68020 (or better) are required, as well as copys of the original C64 ROMs, which are not inc.

OFFICE & PRINT

^+ V0575HOME BUSINESS PACK (6)
QED, Text editor. Text Plus 2.2E, Word Processor. AZSpell, Spell Checker & Dictionary. BBase, A Database program. DATA EASY, Another database. BizCalc, Loan calc. LCD, Calc. SPREAD, Spreadsheet. Budget, Personal Finance. UNITS, Various conversions. CLERK, Small business accounts. SUPERDUPER, FLASHERCOPY, Copier's. TYPIST, Typing Tutor. BOOTX, Virus Killer. SYSINFO, System analyser. DOSMANAGER, Directory program. FONTLIST, FONT MANAGER, Utilities. PRINT STUDIO, Printing Tools. (6 disks)

^+ V1114PRINT LABELS UTLS
Includes various programs like DOC DUMP v2.1, ENVELOPE PRINT v1.20, INLAY MAKER v1.4, MC MASTER v1.1, BANNER v1.0, LABEL PRINT

^+ V1279PRINT A CARD
Want to print a business card or any other type of card then this is the software for you.

^+ V1222PANASONIC STUDIO
The PanaPlus driver is a software for controlling printers with the Commodore Amiga personal computer.

^+ V1236INVOICE PRINTER
invoice printing that we help aid any small business.

^+ V0928LITTLE OFFICE
Its the all rounder do everything, all knowing, all seeing?? Well lets just say its very good.

^+ V1179FILE-O-FAX
was designed to enable computer operators to be able to work at their leisure without worrying about forgetting those important meetings,what they had to do on any particular day or locating business colleagues tele no's.

^+ V1467AWARD CONSTRUCT
A very handy tool for creating your very own awards and certificates. There are many styles, fonts and graphics to choose from. could also be used to make small posters, signs or leaflets. Easy to use and very effective.

^+ V1069PRINTER DRIVERS HP
Deskjet 550 colour driver, Deskjet 500, Deskjet 500c, Ricoh HP1200 400dpi, Canon LBP, Canon BJ300, BJ130, BJ10e, Canon_48, Canon PJ 1080a, HP Paintjet.

^+ V1278MAIL-O-DEX
An excellent way to keep names, addresses, Phone numbers, comments etc and then print out labels loads of them in 1,2,3 and 4 columns.

^+ V1044FANCY PRINTING
BANNER v1.4, GRAPH PAPER v1.2, DISK PRINT

^+ V1357CITIZEN MANAGER
The Citizen Print Manager has been designed in conjunction with Irseesoft.

^* V1051EASY CALC PLUS
is a spreadsheet designed to be both easy to use and fast. If the program looks nice, that wouldn't to be bad either. Unlike other software where the author writes the program first, then bolts on a help system, I have designed the help into the program from the beginning.

^+ V1184AMIGA DIARY
Amiga Diary is a mouse driven diary capable of storing all personal events and the perfect solution to all those forgotten birthdays, missed appointments etc.

^+ V0366600 BUSINESS LETTERS
Over 600 Standard business letters on this disk. Can be used as they are or insert parts into your own letters

^+ V0782FORMS UNLIMITED
Designed to help you design and print different forms. There are a wide number of options and controls which allow you to draw simple boxes, lines, etc in order to create forms for many different purposes. Good.

^+ V0390AMIGA FOX DTP
The first amiga PD Desk Top Publishing program. Excludes various extra features over the old Word processor, Test Editor, Graphics editor and loads more.

^+ V1680AWARD MAKER 2
This is a very good tool for the creation and printing of Awards and certificates. There are hundreds of types to choose from then you can choose a font a border and also some of the text etc. Very good results.

^+ V1751PRINTER DRIVERS
CANON600 v2.0: EPSON FX 850 v1.0 & LX 800, HP4DRIVER v35.8, HP4LSETTER v2.01

^+ V1858DB V2.5
Small/fast database program that I wrote after having tested numerous other PD database programs and always found something lacking or irritating me. They might have dozens of features not found in db, but they lacked font sensitivity and a standard GUI look & 3.0

^+ V1862INVOICE DATABASE V2
Intra is a rather simple, but therefore easy to use database program that was especially designed to deal with invoice information. Everybody, as we like it

^+ V1865LEGAL FORM GENERATR
Generates custom do it yourself legal forms. Database includes forms useful for EVERYONE, plus specialised forms for real estate, small businesses, landlords, employers, etc. Can save you THOUSANDS.

^+ V1995BEGINNERS TYPING TUTOR
This is by far the best typing tutor for years I have seen on the Amiga. It is worth every single penny. It consists of two games, one is called the letter game and the other one is called the word game. On the word game you have to type a word in before the timer runs out. A must for all typers.

^+ V2003REM DATE V2.0
Rem Date is a calender, reminder and filofax all in one. I found it quite good to use and would definetly buy the registered version which is availble from the author.

^+ V2019TEXT ENGINE v3.0
Allows you to make your every own letters and documents then print or store then on disc.

3D & GRAPHICS

^+ V1247TEXTURE MAPS (ABC)
A collection of textures for use with the any program that will take high res textures.

^^ V1554IMAGINE BUDDY (AB)
Here's some features of the new interface: Draggable and Sizeable text and index windows - Button Gadgets for the Search and Move functions Improved Searching The text is now positioned at matching hypertext links and all matches are highlighted for visibility.

^* V1229MAIN ACTOR V1.53
This is an all round animation utility that will create, playback, time and edit animations of any length or format (including graphics cards). Very good. (AB)

^* V1811IMAGESTUDIO V2.0 (AB)
is written for the casual graphics user who wishes to convert or manipulate various graphics formats on a modest Amiga system. There are several commercial offerings available, however the casual user is paying a lot of money for many facilities and options they would probably never use.

^* V1891IMAGEDESK V1.6
is a program to catalog picture directories by generating small representants of the pictures, so called thumbnails.

^+ V1907POVRAY RAYTRACER
Renders in a window on a public screen (even Workbench) with colour sharing, simple HAM/HAM8 support autodetects Cybergfx Screen and renders in direct Colour (15/16/24Bit) if possible.

^+ V1916XFIG V1.2
This is an Amiga port of an X11 structured drawing tool that lets the user interactiely create and manipulate on objects such as lines/circles rectangles/splines/text and other elements. Xfig can produce output in several different formats: Encapsulated PostScript, IBMGL (HP/GL), Pic, PiCTeX, LaTeX, box, epic, eepic, eepicemu, textyl, tpic, X11 Bitmap, X11 Pixmap and gif.

^+ V1922REAL 3D V2.X OBJECTS
Objects are pretty large in size, espessially the 4 cylinder engine, you might run out of memory pretty fast. My Amiga 4000EC30 + FPU is now equipped with 18MB RAM, and I can now raytrace all of my objects.

^+ V1925SPACEDOCK STATION
* 1.3Mb, so you'll need a healthy chunk of memory. * No Slicing was used in modelling, to keep things as small as possible. * Space Doors open using the new States function. * Marquee of Space Door lights.

^+ V2042RAY STORM v1.11
Fast raytracer with many features

^+ V2047SVIEW v5.10
SuperView V5.10 + Library 12.2

^+ V2057IMAGINE OBJECTS 1 (AB)
Contains a selection of objects and extras for Imagine - BLOBS_PRJ - Project to generate a blob animation. DAN_CLASSICAL - An Imagine 2.0 model of a classical guitar. DAN_ELECTRIC - An Imagine 2.0 model of an electric guitar. EAGLE_OBJECT - Eagle Freighter object for Imagine. MANGABABESDEMO - Sexy female human 3D models by Tomwoof. PZKPFWIV - Imagine Object of WWII Mark IV Tank. T65_X_WINGFULL - Large, Detailed Imagine 2.0 X-Wing object.

^* V2065IFF256 720*460, CHIPS, DISKS & FLOWERBED
IFF256 720*460, Chips, Disks & Flowerbed - Use as backgrounds with Scala or Euro-demos where text is put on top of a background/wallpaper etc.

^+ V2066IFF256 720*460, GRAVEL, JEANS & WOODFENCE
To use as backgrounds with Scala or Euro-demos

^+ V2067IFF256 720*460, PENNYS, SAND & SQUARES
To use as backgrounds with Scala or Euro-demos

COMMS

Why not check out our BBS (0181) 2510078 or email -

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5 Disks For £10 + £1 P&P
10 Disks For £17 + £1.43 P&P
15 Disks For £21 + £1.43 P&P
20 Disks For £25 + £2.45 P&P

coming soon web pages.

^* V1745TERM V4.2 [030]
latest version of this very well known comms terminal program. Version 4 has even more features and although it is not for beginners it is probably the best available.

^+ V0979NCOMM V3.0
Is a comms program based on Comm v1.34 with lots of very nice enhancements. Has new functions over v2.0

^* V1722AMIGA TO PSION S3/A
is a implementation of the Psion link protocol which is e.g. built into the Psion S3/S3a ROM. It's main purpose is to provide vice versa nfs like file access.

^+ V1852FINALFAX 95
This is one of those arexx macros which are very handy for automating the more tedious jobs on your Amiga. This one allows you to select options for GPFax from within Final Writer. That means that there is no need to switch from Final Writer to Workbench.

EDUCATION

^+ V1079KEYBOARD TRAINER
This program only concentrates on basic keyboard skills, and is in effect, still a Beta Version, I think you will find it a vast improvement on most so called tutors.

^+ V0793AMIGA BEGINNER
You asked for it! A tutorial for the beginner on using your amiga! Covers the CLI and Workbench, its great for learning about the Amiga. Also contains numerous beautiful 16 colour icons for WB v2.04.

^+ V1845DPAINT 4 BUDDY (AB)
Will teach you how to use Dpaint 4. It works by running along side the well known paint package providing hands on demonstrations of the various features. It is a very good way of learning a program so you want to learn DPaint then this System is one of the best ways.

^+ V1881AMIGATRAINER
very powerful & flexible program to learn foreign languages. You enter the words yourself, so they aren't related to any special language, school or book. every word there are 2 additions to enter.

^^ V1897GEOGRAPHICAL ATLAS
AmiGlobe is a geographical atlas that allows you to navigate in the world map, zooming everywhere, get country data, etc. Requires 2Mb of RAM. (AB)

MUSIC

^+ V1269THE OCTAMED TUTOR
Welcome to the Octamed Tutor, a simple guide through the basics of this excellent music program.

^+ V1207OCTASTUFF
Welcome to OctaStuff, a disk based around work with OctaMED 3 and 4.

^+ V1882ART OF NOISE TRACKER
NEW tracker, NO ProTracker Clone!, 8 channels, fm synthesis, drum sequencer, wave table synthesis.

TIPs, CHEATS

^+ V1416EYE OF THE BEHOLDERS
This disk contains a selection of utilities and software for Eye of the Beholder II, like end of level saved game file, Eye of Beholder 2 special quests explanation, EOB2 Character Editor, Eye of the Beholder Solution, GIF pictures of all 12 levels in Eye of the Beholder.

^+ V1363RPG. ASSISTANT
AD&D play time dungeon master's assistant. The version you see here is a pre release of the program in AmigaBASIC. Right now it will take characters in a text file and load them in to be displayed at will. It also rolls dice and has a handy dandy encounter screen that will keep track of monsters & their current HPs

^^ V1887(AGA) FIXES VOL 1
This program disk will help AGA machine users get some added compatibility out of their older software. Don't forget many supposedly incompatible programs will work on the AGA machines by suitable adjustment of the boot options. (Hold down both mouse buttons).

^+ V1773ACTION REPLAY CHEAT
This disk has on it a text file which contains loads of codes for those people who have action replay devices. There are cheats for hundreds of games. Good.

^+ V1848DIY REKO
This disk has on it an Arexx macro which, when used in conjunction with ImageFX, will make reko cardsets for Klondike AGA almost automatically. Also included is a detailed Amiga Guide document explaining everything.

^+ V1468GAMES HD INSTALL
This disk provides you with the software needed to install certain games onto your A1200. The games that this disk can install are BodyBlows, Goal, Lemmings 2, Superfrog, and Walker. Could be very useful.

^+ V1662HD GAMES INSTALLER 2
Contains a variety of hard disk installer's for a few well known commercial games. These games are as follows: AlienBreed 2 AGA, Jungle Strike, Assassin (Special Edition), Body Blows, Goal, Ishar 2, Zool 2 AGA, Ruff and Tumble, Body Blows 2 AGA, StarDust, Super Frog, Walker, Rise of the Robots, Bubble and Squeak, ElfMania, Aladdin AGA and Motal Kombat 2. Great.

^+ V1886NEW HD INSTALL
Hard Drive Install scripts for 3 games, Beneath a steel sky Flashback King's Quest VI. New updated version (small bugs fixed from last version).

^+ V1988DUNGEON MAPPER V0.3
This is the first version of something called Dungeon Mapper. It will work on Workbench 2+. It allows you to design your own maps for games like Dungeons and Dragons which can be very usefull. It also has Tetris on it if you boot it from Workbench.

^+ V1994CHEATS COMPILATION
This disk is a demo which gives you a taster of what you can have if you buy the registered version. The demo gives you a choice of about 15 games to chose from.

^+ V2040SW CHEAT v4.5
Over 950+ game hints/cheats.

^+ V2041F1GP Ed v3.03
Formula One Grand Prix / WC Editor & F1GP-Ed non-english translation files & Track data for GPDisplay

^+ V2056TREK-THE GUIDE V1.6
Trek-The guide is a complete Star Trek Database. It contains a listing of all the Trek series' complete with an episode synopsis, original airdate, Director and Writer Credits and Guest stars. It also includes a section on very rare promotional press kits and values of them. There are cross references to episodes with you favorite aliens, time travel, and much more! Much of the information was supplied by Paramount. The full version (7 disks Shareware) contains over 170 rare promotional pics. Sorry: Contains the 1st seasons of the Trek series'.

VIDEO

^+ V1196DESKTOP VIDEO
Dot Matrix Stroller, Is a video titling program intended for use in adding scrolling captions to video's. Flood Effect loads an IFF picture and displays it with a Oflood effectO so that it floods the screen.

^* V1156VIDEO TITLER
Generates professional looking TV titles and credits for your own video's.Outstanding abilities are very smooth scrolling, colour slides (AGA support)and usage of colour fonts. Limited demo version only.

GAMES

^^ 4431 BEST AGA TETRIS
Best pentamino tetris. graphics, musics, 100% assembler

^+ 4434 BLACKDAWN v2.1
3-level Dungeon Master style Alien Breed:- charge around the maze levels, shoot lots of aliens, find the lift & move on. but do it in 1st person perspective view.

^+ 4442 SCORCHED TANKS V1.85
The awesome artillery tank game. This one contains loads of goodies like 70 weapons and 13 shield types as well as new goodies.

^^ 4449 PSSST
This is a 1990's version of the old Spectrum Classic PSSST Main features include: - 256 Colours. - Real Time frame rate. - No C code !!!! (I Hate C) - Nice end of game sequence. - Three Levels of play (Slow, Normal, TURBO NUTTER), No Spare.

^+ 4451 LAST LAP
is a car game for one or two players. It is o[...] two player mode. There are about 10+ diffi[...] for you to race around. Some of them are q[...] the start but as you go on they get a lot hard[...] tracks they have these squares which if you [...] shoots you on even faster they you are already [...]

^+ 4452 SPELL TRIS
Tetris style game but the main difference is [...] ters instead of just shapes.

^+ 4454 BATTLE TRUCKS
is a one or two player game in which you c[...] own track and then buy it. You can add [...] motors or even buy a brand new track with [...] nings from your races.

^^ 4457 SCREECH V1.5
This demo ame offers you the oppurtunity [...] thing smaller than your car ever! Improved [...] on the way (whoopee)!. Req 020's with 1M[...] and .5MB fast ram or 030's with 1MB chip r[...] chip ram and 300 kb fast RAM.

^+ 4459 SUPER EARTH DEFENSE [...]
is a classical shooting game.

^+ 4462 XASTEROIDS
This is a 'port' of xasteroids, an X11 appli[...] X11 server (DaggeX or others) is needed to [...] gram! This program is using libX11 by Ter[...] You don't need this either since it is a link li[...] compiled into the binary.

^+ 4463 BOULDERDASH 64
A complete OS-friendly (multitasking) Bo[...] with C64 graphics and sounds. 68020+, [...] (DblNTSC required), KS V39, [...] powerpacker.library. Smooth scrolling 12[...] C64 levels+sounds, Cheats, Joystick and ke[...] trol, User definable games and levels, two pl[...]

^+ 4464 BREAKIN' BRIKS V1.0
Great version of the very cool Breakout typ[...] AGA Amigas only. Works with 2Mb CHIP [...] Improved performance with FAST mem. Gr[...]

^+ 4465 CHAMPIONSHIP MANAG[...] TOR V2.4 68020+
This is the first public release of Champions[...] Editor (CmEd). It was written because we h[...] game to death and were looking for a wa[...] some interest back into game.

^^ 4466 DPACMAN AGA
15 levels and 5 bonus levels. The registered [...] 50 levels and 15 bonus levels and extra g[...] improvements. Features: Can use extern[...] modules and XPK for packed modules.

^+ 4467 JOUSTER 3
If you haven't heard of the good old favorit[...] you're a pretty young or fairly old dude. [...] game brings Joust to the Amiga and also [...] ments such as powerups, etc. You can even [...] dactyl as a steed. For 1 or 2 players. Check [...]

^+ 4468 PATCH LEMMINGS 2 TO [...] FROM HD
Patch to allow Lemmings2 to run from hard [...]

^+ 4469 CRITICAL HIT
is a highly detailed fantasy combat game, [...] ates tabletop war gaming on the Amiga ([...] RAM). A strategic war game with excelle[...] D landscapes and a wide variety of fantas[...] ures and scenery - Campaign and map desig[...]

^+ 4470 PANIC SOCIETY V1.1
Hillery & her friends have taken total c[...] world. as one of some 10 million people [...] for transfering to the country of your origi[...] one has tampered with your environmenta[...] ing you to awaken from a mind controlled s[...]

^+ 4471 BRATWURST
A Roketz-like game for two to four player[...] zoom keeps all players in view in the least [...] vector graphics.

^+ 4472 CULTURE TANK
A single screen tank combat game with [...] which may be human or computer contro[...] all-against-all modes. 3 types of weapon [...] siles and flamethrowers.

^+ 4477 WIZZYS QUEST
is the best PD platform/puzzle game [...] played, so despite its bugginess (see below[...] upload it to Aminet. Wizzys Quest has 50 [...] progressively harder.

^+ 4478 BIACCOARCHIVE! V1.0
Nibbler arcade clone by Maurizio Facca.

^+ 4479 BOB THE AMAZING LE[...]
Amazing Pac Man clone which features [...] changeable music and many different [...] types including appearing walls, ice and wa[...]

^+ 4484 REBELLION
is a very good shoot em up. You are a l[...] which travells around space trying to pick [...] and destroying all the missles that are comi[...]

^+ 4485 LEGEND POUNDS ISLA[...]
Here we have an adventure game. Half [...] text based this game is played almost ent[...] mouse. Sprites backdrops with objects to e[...]

^+ 4486 MASH
An excellent game. You choose to control [...] (a potato on legs!) or a Tank. You then n[...] whole load of obstacles in order to get the [...] other side. Great graphics, great sound an[...]

^+ 4488 PSYCHEUAL
An Alien Breed clone. You are a bloke w[...] gun who has to run about each level shoo[...] ple and aliens. The level graphics are go[...] lot of detail plus the gameplay is not too ea[...]

^+ 4552 H.E.R.O
Something is going to happen. A big int[...] going to take place. We are about to r[...] which we had to miss for a long time n[...] you ask me!). Coming soon is an Amiga [...] old Activision game H.E.R.O. And that' [...] can be a part of its release.

^+ 4553 ARMORED COMBAT E[...]
Full version of pete w storonskij5 ma[...] Armored Combat Edition! Drive tanks fro[...] countries in a demo-derby game with w[...] FULL VERSION is freely distributable. [...] files are intact and present. Uses Memor[...] Protocols to make sure the game will run o[...]

^+ 4554 BLOODFEST
Captive & HiredGuns style 3d adventure

^+ 4555 TRAIN DRIVER SIM V1.[...]
Profile chart generated in real time sh[...] miles - Fog, in addition to Dry/Wet - visib[...] very slippery rail - Data updated and m[...] added between Crewe and Carlisle - Key [...] improved - Now creates timings for any [...] If, on the Startup screen, you type in a [...] from the built-in trains in the Save draw[...] all other parameters, and then click OK, [...] look in. Trains/ and see if a file exists for [...]

^+ 4556 ZHANDULINHELMI AD[...]
A Finnish text adventure with some graph[...] pheric music

^+ 4557 POWEROIDS V1.2
Multitasking Asteroids, raytraced gfx, 1-4[...]

^+ 4558 INTMERCS
Rebelstart type strategy game. Requires [...] or two players. Complete with four scena[...]

^^ 4559 WORMS MAPS
These are a buncha maps me and my fla[...] the amiga version of worms... Descriptio[...] TUNNEL.WRM Underground warfare. [...] Ninja Rope-tastic!. SCREAM.WRM [...] found on AMFormat Gallery. TRIPIN[...] Wierd, spacy theme, with shafted pale[...] NECROMUNDA.WRM in previous rele[...] MUNDA.WRM Ohh..You'll LOV[...] BEN2.WRM Another shafted palette. Ba[...]

^+ 4560 DUNGEON HERO
Fantastic RPG like Dungeon Master

^+ 4561 ELDRITCH V1.35
Top-view adventure hack-and-slash.

CODE REFERENCE

^+ Works on all machines
^* Req Workbench 2.0 or above
^^ Req Workbench 3.0 or above
(ABC) Product has ABC disk (ie, three)

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C64 VOL 2

CD301
£19.99

Remember the good days - Contains all the Software that we have collected during our great times on the C64. Dating from 1984 to present day.

Everything as it may seem a lot of people there is still a lively C64 scene today. Although very different from a few years ago there are still a lot of people still heavily into the 64, And the rest of you, like us, have a lot of good memories.

That is one of the reasons why we compiled this CD.

So anytime we want to reminisce the old days you can just pull out the CD, plug it in & Everythings brought back.

* We Garuantee you! that you will not have seen many of these amazing Mega demos as a high amount have not been releases before.

* Our C64 experts have spent months of fruitful work preparing this disc, converting files from 5 1/4 inch floppy disks, Searching through the internet sites, talking to programmers etc.

AMIGA - Contains Amiga tools to be used for copying & converting the .D64 images back to your 1541 or into your Amiga. Also included is the FULL version of A64 Emulator Package.

DEMOS - This directory contains our entire C64 Demos collection. They date back from around 1986 until April of 1995.

There are literally thousands of demos and magazines. Oh the fun I had looking over my old demos and reading charts in 5 year old magazines. The collection is as complete as it could be for someone mail trading for years.

MS-DOS - Contains various IBM tools to be used with the image files. The IBM Tools section is considerably larger than the Amiga Dir.

In here you can find a tool to do virtually everything you have ever dreamed of to a .D64 file. Also included are the latest Shareware and Upgrade copies of C64S and PC64, the two most common PC C64 Emulator's.

SID TUNES - In here you will find hundreds of Sid Player tunes. All the tunes are in Amiga Playsid format BUT have all been renamed with PC SidPlayer file extensions so they are runable on a PC as well. They are also runable through PlaySid. The latest versions of which is also on the disc are provided in the relevant Tools directories.

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SCENE STORM - Is the most concise and easy to use Scene CD ever released. The files are presented in Ready-to-Run format, with a fantastic Magic Workbench interface featuring custom icons. Pointing and clicking is all that is required to run the files which are all individually commented with compatibility details and the ability to abort back to the WB.

This CD simply oozes quality from the very moment you see it. The programs on Scene Storm will give your Amiga the biggest workout it has ever had, all without cluttering up your work disk.

AGA machine (a1200/a4000) is required to obtain full benefit of this CD.

Order SCENE STORM today - its the best thing to hit the Amiga this year!.

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CODE: CD289
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The Best utilities CD for use with your workbench.

This is the ideal companion to your workbench. Not only are there the best programs on this CD for the Amiga but they are also ready to run.

There is also an installer that installs the programs to the Hard Disk.

This CD covers all areas of interest: The programmer, the user, the creative and the gamer will all find what they need.

There are many shareware programs on this CD that are a special price if you register them.

AGA EXPERIENCE 1

CODE: CD210
PRICE: £18.99

The Best Selection of AGA Software anywhere

NFA - Famous for their 'Word' diskmag, & Bodyshop slideshows, are very proud to present their first Amiga CD-ROM disc - First CD dedicated to AGA owners.

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MAGIC WORKBENCH - Colour scheme and icons. We have spent months making this CD the very smartest looking CD available today.

WORLD ATLAS

CODE: CD305
PRICE: £28.99

Wisedome Limited presents a brilliant new World Atlas designed exclusively for the Amiga market.

The atlas will run on all AGA machines (CD32, A1200 and A4000) and it is based on the Mountain High Maps collection incorporating state-of-the-art enhanced satellite maps.

The pages used have been specially designed to operate most effectively with the control system on CD32 as well as a mouse on other systems.

Economic, cultural, and historical facts are fully and clearly represented. Over 190 countries are included, each supported by 2-6 maps separately depicting major cities, rivers, mountains, and geographical position, together with national flag.

The Atlas has been extremely well received by the experts. Here are just a few quotes.

'If you ever wanted to find out about the World you won't find a better package than the World Atlas'. - Amiga Computing 90%'.

World Atlas... Must have taken a very long time to compile... The maps are of excellent quality and the final round up of details including population, religion, languages and GDP are very interesting' - Amiga Shopper 90%'.

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This CD contains Blankers that have been released for the Amiga. Many of the blankers are ready to use as well as some for graphics cards and KS1.2. Also includes The latest Shareware programs, lots of modules, animation's and fonts.

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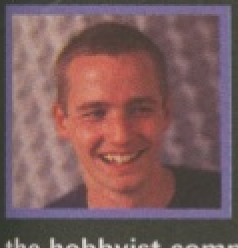
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* Battlestar Galactica

Get Serious

Get stuck into a top reviews section that headlines with the A4000T, Image FX 2.6 and the new Surf Squirrel from HiSoft.

Horgan's Organ



What a healthy reviews section we have this month! Summer is traditionally a quiet time for the hobbyist computer biz but it's showing no signs of letting up yet. The official Amiga Technologies A4000T has finally arrived and it's a monster! Whether this turns out to be another limited edition collectors' item remains to be seen.

Amiga artists will be gagging to get their hands on the new release of Image FX 2.6 which now comes complete with an impressive array of effects and tools for everyone from the part-time doodler to the professional animator.

Then there's the Surf Squirrel which could totally revolutionise the Amiga comms and Internet scene with its high speed serial link and combined SCSI interface. Say hello to faster access and lower phone bills!

For those still soldiering on with their CD32s there's yet another upgrade solution in the shape of the CD32 ProModule. Maybe this is the one that will transform your console into a real computer or perhaps you should just buy an A1200: we give you a detailed price to performance breakdown of both options.

So as you can see, there's plenty going on out there in Amigaland to keep us all entertained. Let's hope the new owners of the Amiga realise what they've got themselves into!

Tony Horgan
Technical Editor



CD32 ProModule p62



A4000 Tower p54

Amiga A4000 Tower

■ Price: £2100 ■ Developer: Commodore/Amiga Technologies ■ Supplier: Various (check adverts)

The biggest and most powerful Amiga ever finally arrives on these shores.

During the Commodore regime there was the A4000 desktop; the first big-box Amiga sporting the AGA chip-set, OS 3.0 and a 68040 CPU. The next generation of A4000 was the cheaper A4000/30; which was the same machine but with a 68030 CPU. This sold for the reasonable sum of £1,000. However, even this machine wasn't enough for many, mainly because of the lack of drive bays in the A4000 desktop. So, just before Commodore's liquidation they released the A4000T, a tower version of the A4000 desktop with the fast 4091 SCSI controller built onto the motherboard. Since the Amiga Technologies takeover, the A4000T is the only big-box Amiga in production.

Drive bays

The first thing that hits you about the A4000T is its size. It's absolutely huge, taller than an A1200 stood on its end and almost as deep so it's just about square. Outwardly it's loaded with drive bays accessible from the front. Three 5.25" drive bays are mounted horizontally at the top though one is used for the built-in floppy drive sitting amid a 3.5" adapter bay. Underneath this is another couple of 5.25" drive bays but this time mounted vertically. The supplied Seagate 1Gb drive is mounted behind the right-hand bay.

There's a swinging door which covers all of the drive bays when closed. This will have to be left permanently open or it'll need to be removed altogether if you want to change disks regularly. Still, for pose value the tower looks impressive with the hatch closed.

At the top of the front panel are the LEDs, switches and keylock which disables the keyboard. The LEDs are the boring round variety but bright enough to see. The power switch is mounted here as is a handy reset button. Needless to say the 'turbo' button doesn't do anything but indicate that the case is a recycled PC unit.

The entire front panel comes away from the unit with a bit of force. No fiddly plastic clips like A4000 desktops, just proper metal clips which make it fairly simple to remove. This is just as well since there's a metal plate over the vertical drive bays which needs to be removed too in order to fit drives here. The drives themselves are fitted to sliding brackets. They can be clipped out of the bay and slid forward making it easy to take a drive out of the system without need of a screwdriver.

My first gripe with the unit though is that the supplied Seagate hard drive didn't fit snugly in the sliding mounting unit. It had become unclipped in transit and banged around on the metal cover plate. As a result the drive was a write off when it arrived and a brand new one had to be ordered. This may have just been our unit but either way, the hard drive really should be screwed onto the chassis. This wasn't the only problem with the hard drive side of things; the tower has dip switches on the rear to set up the 4091 SCSI controller. There appeared to have been no effort made to preconfigure them to a sensible value. Some manual reading and experimentation was required in order to get the controller functioning properly.



Scuzzball

Strangely enough, the SCSI connector on the disk-module plate is the SCSI-2 variety. It has the capability to be used for high speed external SCSI devices but you'd have to track down a special lead to drive most common devices such as the Zip and such forth. As such I found it annoying and wished there was a simple 25 pin D SCSI connector instead.

That aside, the SCSI controller in the 4000T is even better than the famous controller of the A3000. It's a full SCSI-2 controller which supports the so-called SCSI-Fast protocol with the capability to move about 10Mbs of data per second. In practice, it pumps out a maximum of around 4.5Mb/s with the provided 1Gb hard drive which is pretty darn nippy to say the least, even more impressive given that it's a DMA (Direct Memory Access) controller and so even at these rates uses very little CPU time. In our tests the controller worked faultlessly with CD-ROMs, hard drives and the Jaz drive (which also does around 4Mb/s on this controller). This is an extremely welcome addition considering the cost of Z3 Zorro SCSI cards such as the 4091 or Fastlane.

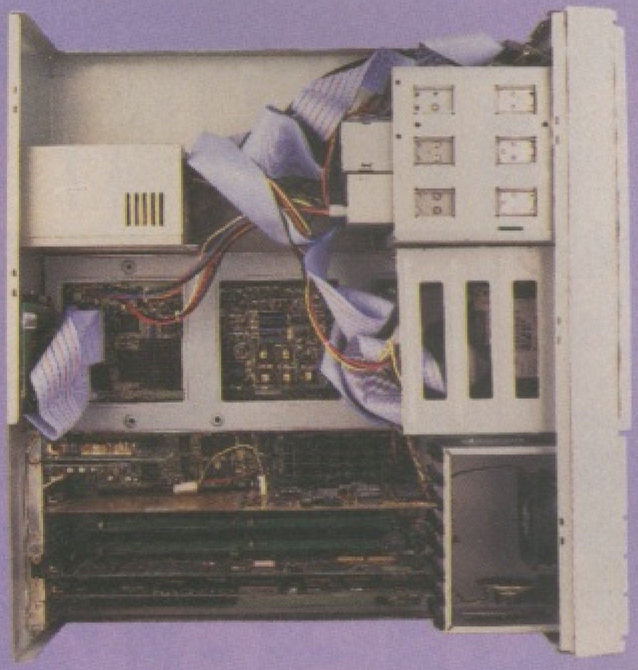
Tower of power

CPU wise, the A4000T is fitted with the infamous A3640 25MHz 68040 card. This card is infamous because of its crippled memory access speed and it's a throw-back to the A4000's architecture which was originally designed for the 68030. It is, however, significantly faster for most tasks than a 50MHz 68030 especially when it comes to floating point (FPU) operations. It's not amazingly fast, though, and so is not up to the task of serious 3D rendering if time is a major concern, but for casual use it's quite a boon compared to lesser 68030 CPUs.

The bonus here is that if you wanted to upgrade this to a 68060 CPU you can completely remove the existing CPU card and sell it on for use in an A3000 or A4000/030, for which there is still a healthy market. The CPU daughterboard is housed beneath the major support strut within the tower which means a complete disassembly is necessary in order to install an accelerator. Thankfully the manual explains the process (see the review of the Tekmagic 4060 accelerator in this issue for details).

Ins and outs

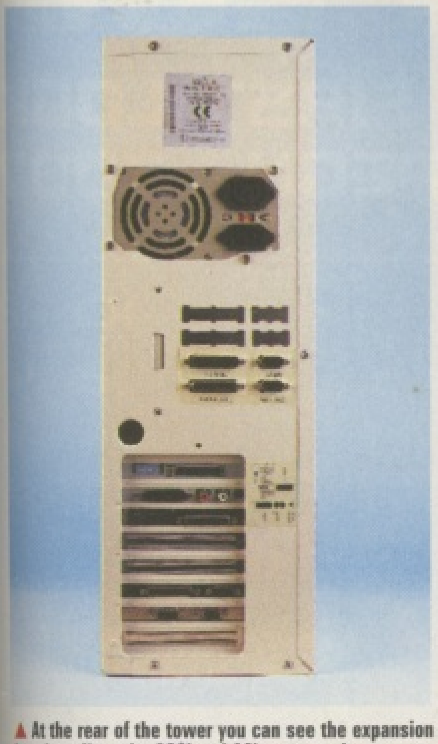
The case of the Tower wraps around both the top and bottom of the chassis so it's not terribly easy to whip it on and off. When removed it does expose the innards quite nicely, though. Internally there's quite a bit of space wasted with the power supply mounted on the rear about a third of the way down leaving empty space above it. I would have liked to have seen a hard drive bay here like those in equivalent high end PC cases. The SCSI and power cables come bundled with cable ties which will need removing to fit any extra devices. An extra three SCSI headers are provided on the cable internally but I would have liked at least four since this was already used up with another hard drive, CD-ROM and a CD writer in our unit.



The Amiga's internal ports: serial, parallel and mouse are at the rear of the Tower with a daughterboard connected via a ribbon cable to the motherboard. There's an unused ribbon header socket at the top of the board but the manual doesn't mention the board at all, let alone what this socket might do. Fortunately the disk-module is documented. It's mounted parallel to the Zorro slots so that it presents its SCSI connector and dip switches to the rear of the tower. Connected directly to the motherboard, it also houses the floppy and SCSI connectors for the ribbon cables. The disk-module has two RCA/phono jacks for Amiga audio and, surprisingly, a headphone jack which proved to output a useful volume level even if there's no volume control. On the audio side it's worth noting the tower has a tiny speaker suspended at the front of the case pointing upwards just under the front panel fan. It's not much use except for beeps but it could be handy if you have no other audio output available.

Zorro fans

The all important area of a big-box Amiga is the Zorro slots. Here the A4000T is relatively well catered for with six slots divided into various functions. The top five slots are Zorro 2/3 slots with the 100 pin Zorro sections towards the rear. The top two are video slots. These carry the A4000's video signals for use with video related cards such as the DPS PAR and VLab Motion. These slots aren't used by most graphics boards however as they require graphics information rather than a video signal.



▲ At the rear of the tower you can see the expansion bay slots. Note the SCSI and A/V ports on the top two.

The next three slots down from the top are dual Zorro 2/3 slots with PC XT/AT slots towards the rear. The XT/AT slots are not electrically connected to the Amiga and are only activated once some kind of PC bridgeboard is installed (such as the Golden Gate 2 unit) or a bridgeboard with a PC CPU. The last slot at the bottom is a PC XT/AT only slot.

Let's make-up

Thankfully, Commodore saw the error of their ways in the usage of the horrible single sided Simm sockets used in the A4000 desktops. The tower has decent Simm sockets which will accept double sided Simms. It comes with one 4Mb Simm as standard making up a total of 6Mb. Adding extra RAM with be the first order of business for most, adding further to the expense. A bulky card in the top slot may intrude on the space occupied by the bottom two Simm sockets, in which case you could use 8Mb Simms. There are two possible memory configurations using the four Simm sockets: 4x4Mb or 2x8Mb Simms. The limit here is still an unsatisfactory total of 16Mb (plus the 2Mb of on-board Chip RAM). More RAM could be added with a replacement processor card or a dedicated memory card though.

The original A4000s came with a half speed high density floppy drive. This is required as the Paula chip (responsible for floppy disk control) can't handle the data rate of a normal high density floppy. This time around AT said they couldn't obtain this rare unit and so the tower is fitted with a DD drive. This is very annoying especially as there's no external floppy drive port! The bottom line is that if you need to run ShapeShifter or access HD floppies then you'll need to replace the internal drive with something like the Power XL drive, which Power Computing supply specifically for A4000s.

Conclusion

Considering that the A4000T is a very nice Amiga loaded with bays, Zorro 2/3 slots, proper Simm sockets and a kick-ass SCSI controller it hasn't done too much wrong so far. Where it falls down is the price which is almost absurd given the specification. However, if you're serious about your Amiga activities, price may not be a concern. You can't help comparing it to the A1200 and A4000 type 3rd party tower solutions which are just around the corner (see Blittersoft adverts). These offer the same kind of specification for far less expense. In fact it's rumoured that AT have licensed out the A4000T to Eagle Computer Systems, designers of the Blittersoft range of tower systems.

Rating this tower is difficult; it's a wonderful machine when, for example, loaded with Zorro cards such as a GVP Spectrum graphics card and IO Expander. A decked-out Amiga such as this runs rings around the best the PC can offer but comes at a premium price. The decision to buy an A4000T or a cheaper alternative is yours. The best bet is to stay tuned for reviews of the Blittersoft tower systems in forthcoming issues. If you can't wait, I'm sure you'd be happy with the A4000T, if a little short of change. ■

Mat Bettinson

A4000 Tower

ease of use.....................72%
Manual reading and screw driver handling talents recommended.

performance...................88%
It's big, it's got Zorro slots, a fast SCSI controller and a 68040. Yee ha!

value for money..............68%
We all want this machine. If only it didn't require a second mortgage.

OVERALL
The definitive though slightly flawed Amiga masterpiece.
76%


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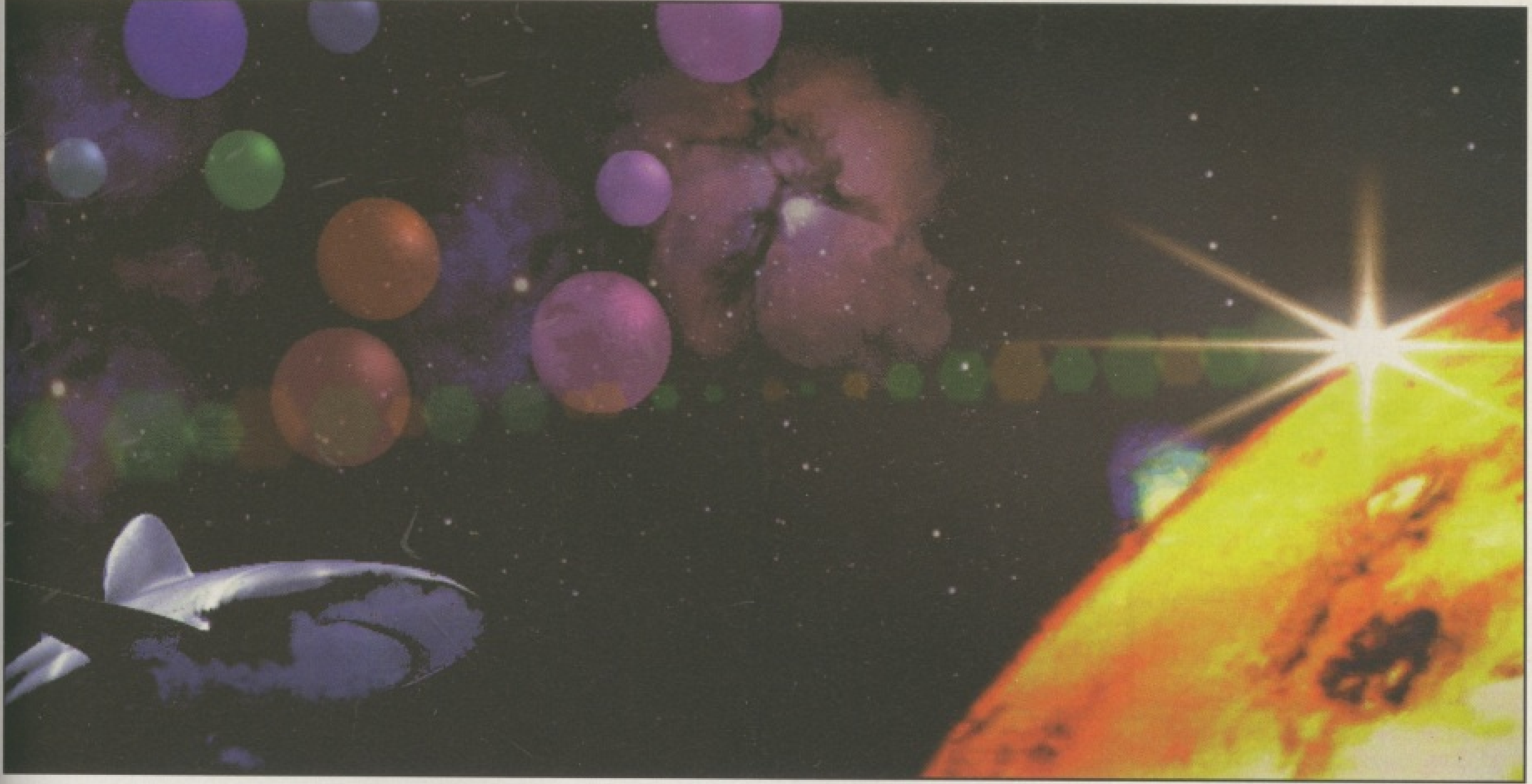


Image FX 2.6

■ Price: £149.99 ■ Developer: Nova Design ■ Supplier: Wizard Developments © 01322 527 800

Image processing and graphics take another leap forward with the latest release of the ever-popular Image FX.

It's good to see software like Image FX forging ahead year after year, defying the general opinion that says you need an Apple Mac or some megabuck graphics console to create state-of-the-art images, movies and effects. Many of you will have had an introduction to Image FX with version 1.5 which came free with the June 1995 issue of CU Amiga Magazine (now sold out). Since then it's had a major update to version 2 and now 2.6 is here, even more powerful than ever.

At first sight there are no obvious changes to the program. The custom interface from previous versions is still here, but as custom interfaces go this is a pretty good one so that's no problem. You can direct it to run on a Workbench screen or work on a 24-bit display via Cyber GraphX if necessary. Once you start examining the effects menus the new additions start to make themselves known. If you're still using V1.5 you'll find a huge amount of new effects, and even since 2.1 there have been significant changes.

New features for 2.6

Here are some of the new features that have arrived since 2.1.

- Updated CyberGraphX support
- Wireless hook
- IMP and AutoFX updates
- Updated modules
- Updated lightning
- Bubbles
- Colour balancing
- Displacement
- Film grain
- Fire
- Gaussian blur
- Liquid
- Remove grain
- Sparkle
- Sponge

New effects

The most gratifying new features are those found in the Effects, Distortion and Filters menus. Take the fire generator for instance. This is a post-process effect that has very little interaction with the background image but is great fun to use. It draws a realistic flame wherever you place the preview outline, with a host of parameter sliders for you to tweak – just the ticket for adding flares to rockets and guns.

Another of these instant-hit type effects is Bubble. This covers your image (or selected area) with an array of bubbles which can be transparent (refracting the pixels behind them) or tinted. You can also set the amount of 'specularity' to give them a shiny highlight as if they've been ray-traced. As with most of the effects, there are loads of settings to control the number of bubbles, their sizes and so on. It's fun when used in its most obvious form but can also be put to good use as a texturing tool. A new distortion effect has appeared called Liquid. Along similar lines to the existing Dream effect it distorts the image with a series of waves.

If you find the pristine output of 24-bit graphics just a bit too squeaky clean you can take advantage of the new Film Grain option, which simulates imperfections in film by scattering slightly darker and lighter spots across the picture. There's also an option to remove grain from a picture, although setting the right levels for this to be effective can be tricky. The Distort function has been

Continued overleaf ▶▶▶

updated and renamed Displace. This can now distort an image by processing it with itself, or by using a spare picture or alpha channel to add movement to the original image.

Fire power

One of the best additions in version 2 was the lightning bolt generator. Now this has been joined by a fire generator which comes with a similar amount of parameters to allow you to build a single flame or an entire inferno, either static or animated. Once again there are a few settings presets which can be loaded to instantly simulate wood or gas flames, candles or 'forest fire'. You can even render a fireball using the Radial options to draw a sequence of flames in a circular pattern. To ensure you're not limited to flames that look identical, each is generated from a 'random seed' value. If you want to clone a flame you can keep the same seed value and render again. Otherwise you can click on the New Seed button to select a new random value. The same system is used for other effects with random elements, such as the lightning and liquid operations.

Not forgetting ...

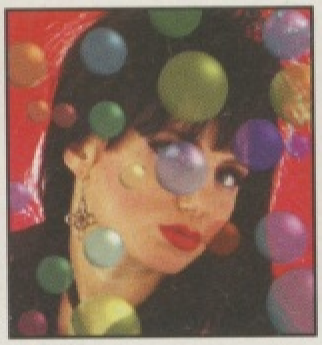
Before we get carried away with the new features of 2.6 it's worth noting some of the excellent features that first came about with 2.0. If you never upgraded from our 1.5 cover disk you missed out on a lot. For a start there's the Paint FX section. This takes an IFF brush and then smears it around the image in one of a number of patterns. This throws up endless possibilities for adding impressionist type effects to your pictures. You can also use your own custom made brushes and alter the settings to make up your own presets, which can be saved out to disk for use on other images in future. Also there are all the other many and varied processes and effects that have kept Image FX on the cutting edge of Amiga graphics over the past few years.

A selection of effects

Here's a selection of processes that go towards making Image FX the Amiga's best image processing package. The initial picture is the original unprocessed image included for reference.



▲ Original (no effects)



▲ Bubbles



▲ Crystal



▲ Fire



▲ Lens flare



▲ Liquid



▲ Paint FX (hair)



▲ Paint FX (molecule)



▲ Paint FX (shingle)



▲ Sparkle



▲ Hockney tiling



▲ Lightning

Speed

Just about the only thing that Image FX has against it is operation speed. Working with 24-bit images and complex processes you have to expect some waiting around. Without reverse engineering the program code it's impossible to tell how efficient the routines are but the perception (when compared to its rivals) suggests that it could be faster. However, it would be a shame to compromise the quality of the processing for the sake of speed. There are thumbnail previews too which help reduce wasted rendering time. Although sometimes the previews can be misleading when used with certain effects you wouldn't want to do without them. Tests for this review were mainly carried out on an A1200 with a 50MHz 68030 and 16Mb of RAM, working with 24-bit images of around 640 x 512 pixels in size. Generally, effects rendering times on this system were not a major problem and although it will work on lesser machines, we recommend a similar processor and at least 8Mb of RAM. Don't expect to be able to emulate a professional graphics workstation with a 2Mb RAM floppy-only system!



▲ The new fire generator was used to render the flames, each of which can have its own 'random seed' (which we forgot to do in this example).

Conclusion

If you hadn't already guessed, we like Image FX 2.6. This latest upgrade has taken it another rung up the ladder so that it's now snapping at the heels of the likes of Photoshop on the Mac. Give it a fast processor with an FPU, 32Mb of RAM, a high resolution 24-bit display and removable drive such as a Zip, and you'd be all tooled up for professional graphics work. With advanced features such as highly configurable virtual memory and plenty of support for printing industry standards you should have no problem interfacing with existing Mac-orientated design studios and repro houses.

On the other hand, Image FX would still perform well on a comparatively modest 6Mb RAM AGA Amiga. It's one of the most exciting products that the Amiga will see this year and deserves serious consideration from any graphically-minded Amiga user. ■

Tony Horgan

IMAGE FX 2.6

A500 | A500+ | A600 | A1200 | A1500 | A2000 | A3000 | A4000

system requirements: 2Mb RAM, Workbench 2 +, hard drive. recommended: 68030+, at least 6Mb RAM, AGA or 24 bit graphics card.

ease of use 90%
Vastly improved over recent versions with good help and previews.

performance 94%
Excellent results and effects unique to this program but it could be faster.

value for money 90%
The price reflects the many professional features that are absent in its rivals.

OVERALL
The best image processor for your Amiga. **93%**

CD32 ProModule

■ Price: Variable(See boxout) ■ Developer: Elsat ■ Supplier: Gordon Harwoods © 01733 836781

Inside your CD32 lurks the power to run all kinds of applications – with a bit of help from the ProModule.

To anyone who bought a CD32 it must have seemed like a good idea at the time: all the power of an Amiga 1200 with a built in CD-ROM drive, without the hassle or expense of a keyboard and disk drive. However, once you've outgrown the fairly limited supply of CD32 games you might want to put all the hardware to some more productive use by transforming the game console into a fully fledged computer by means of an expansion system.

First there was the SX1, an awkward extension to the back panel. It almost doubled the depth of the CD32, but it was the only option at the time. The last one we looked at, the SX32 was a much more acceptable affair: it fitted inside the CD32 without fuss and like the first it offered a keyboard, RAM and hard drive expansion as well as various ports like serial and parallel and a proper RGB output.

The ProModule takes a different approach. It connects to the CD32 like the others via the FMV interface, but it's been designed to sit beneath the console rather than inside like the SX32 or hanging out of the back like the SX1. This arrangement adds about four centimetres to the height of the CD32, bringing it up to the same vertical dimensions as an A3000 or most other desktop computers. But it looks like no other desktop machine because, rather than go with Commodore grey, the Polish manufacturers have painted their big box of tricks black. And there's no doubting what you're looking at either because they've helpfully printed 'CD32 ProModule' in bold white lettering on the front. It's certainly not a pretty sight beneath the CD32 (itself no work of art), but certainly it works.

Disk drive

Where other expansions expect you to attach an external disk drive, this is built into the ProModule as standard. This is damn handy, not least of all because another disk drive port is provided in the casing too, should you want two. And just to bring you bang up to date with A1200 owners Elsat have unfortunately installed a PC HD drive, reworked to handle Amiga 880k disks. This means that Zeewolf and a host of other old games that use a non-standard file structure will not work on it. You may remember that this is what happened when the Amiga Magic pack was launched. Still, this only effects a minority of games, albeit a jolly playable minority.

The black box is attached to the CD32 using a slide-on connector at the back (once the requisite panel has been removed of course) and like the SX1, but unlike the internal SX32, you can attach an FMV card should you come across one in a car boot sale. Internally the CD32 remains empty, which could be a major advantage if Elsat keep their promises.

The disk drive takes up the best part of one half of the ProModule but there is enough space for a 3.5' IDE drive, a single SIMM socket for up to 8Mb of double or single sided RAM and an FPU socket.

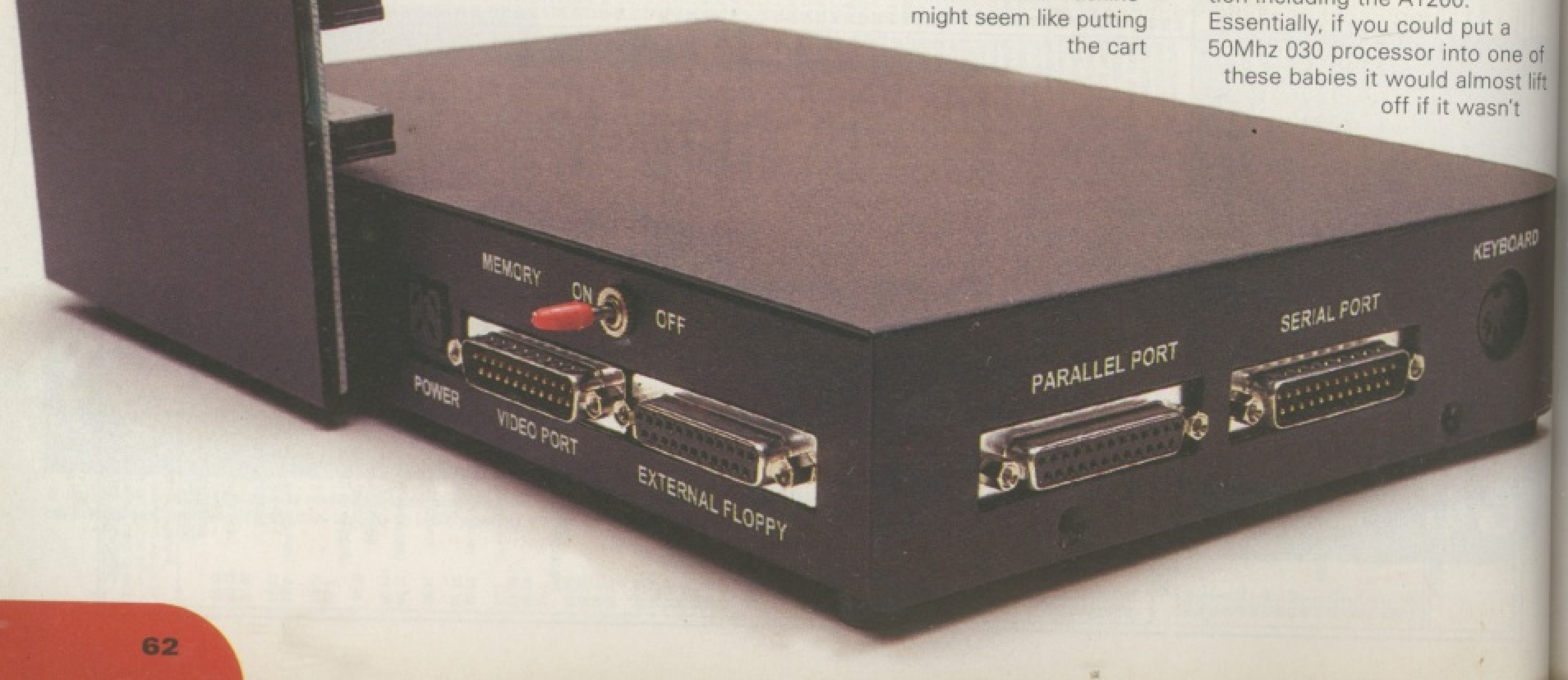
Speed?

Yes, there's an FPU socket. One of the criticisms of the SX1 and SX32 was that, apart from RAM, nothing could be done to alter the speed of the computer. Elsat have kind of reached a half way house with the FPU slot. While adding an FPU to a 68020-based machine might seem like putting the cart before the horse, it will benefit certain applications such as 3D rendering and spreadsheets; basically anything which requires serious number crunching. Contrary to popular belief (spread by a magazine that should know better) Alien Breed 3D and other Doom-a-likes will not benefit one iota from this FPU but the addition of fast RAM will definitely make these games more of a pleasure to play.

To fill up that extra space inside the CD32 Elsat are also reported to be investigating a processor upgrade for the FMV slot. Whether this is possible or not remains to be seen, but it would put the ProModule head and shoulders above the opposition including the A1200. Essentially, if you could put a 50Mhz 030 processor into one of these babies it would almost lift off if it wasn't

ProModule features

- Ports: serial, parallel, S-Video, AUX (for keyboard), external floppy drive connecter, external power supply, FMV pass-through
- 1 SIMM socket (up to 8Mb)
- IDE hard drive interface
- FPU socket (PLCC type)
- Realtime clock
- 880K floppy disk drive
- Memory disable switch
- PC AT keyboard
- Software disk



screwed to the table. And if they were to include a SCSI chip option on this board it would be icing on the cake for those with an access speed fetish.

The addition of extra RAM, an FPU and an internal hard drive (especially a 5.25 inch model) is really too much for the standard CD32 power supply, so Elsat have thoughtfully provided a standard Amiga power jack on the back so you can use an old A500 or A1200 power supply if you have one. This does mean that you have to run two power supplies though – the ProModule will not power your CD32 as well. This is a pity because one solid high wattage power supply like the Goliath or MicroniK could have done the job.

Tank-top

The ProModule is built like a tank and it looks like one too, complete with a robust steel case. What it lacks in finesse it makes up for in practicality though: the serial and parallel ports are on the left hand side, below the joystick and mouse ports of the CD32, which makes them very accessible. However there are problems.

The sheer height of the two units combined means that you will have to stand your monitor on something for full visibility and I'm not at all convinced by the hard plastic feet on the bottom which do not provide much grip on desk surfaces. Likewise the flat metal top surface of the ProModule is not well served by the poxy, almost nonexistent rubber pads on the CD32. Changing disks can result in the whole thing slip sliding away. This isn't helped by the connector at the rear which does not fit flush to either unit and allows too much flexibility (with guru danger) for my liking.



That said it worked well through four weeks of testing. The CD changing routine was a tad dodgy at times. Opening up the CD tray lid can cause a bit of wobble on the FMV interface that links the two units together. We did discover some productivity CDs which strangely just didn't want to register, but this was the exception rather than the rule and everything else worked like a dream.

However, cosmetically I'm still very attracted to the SX32; it fits inside your CD32 and does almost everything the ProModule does. But the floppy drive is standard here, there's no messing about with external drives unless you want another one, and there is that FPU to think about. If you want to use Imagine and Texture Studio, for example, this will be a major bonus, but on its own it won't transform your CD32 into a Pentium beater.

Without a faster processor this FPU is of limited use. A processor expansion has not yet been developed, but if you are in the market for a CD32 expansion and you want a bigger processor look at it like this: there will never be one for the SX32 – at least one is on the cards (ahem, sorry) for the ProModule (we've heard that sort of thing before though).

Conclusion

It seems quite a few Amiga fans have been following the 'wait and see' approach to upgrading their machines. Now that the Walker project looks as though it may be shelved indefinitely and A1200 prices refusing to drop, perhaps it's time the waiting was over and the world's CD32s were transformed into computers. After all it does seem a shame to let all that hardware waste away with a dwindling collections of old games.

If neither of the existing CD32 expansions has had enough features to lure you, this could just be the one that finally gives your old game console a new lease of life. ■

Alan Dykes

Cost comparison

It's all very well having an expansion which you can add lots of bits to, but what will the final cost be? Well, the basic unit with floppy drive and keyboard costs £249.95. Suppliers Gordon Harwoods will gladly add as many extra goodies to the ProModule as possible and won't be shy about charging you for them either, but will the cost rocket out of all proportion? A 570Mb HD will cost you £170 or so, 4Mb RAM about £70 and a 33Mhz FPU £70. Add these and you have £560, not dissimilar to the £500 A1200 HD. For a balanced analysis see right. We reckon the ProModule set-up would survive a fall from a height better than a CD-equipped A1200, thanks to the strong ProModule casing but don't try this at home folks!

A1200 HD (£499)

RAM: 2Mb
CPU: 14MHz 68020
Hard drive: 170 Mb IDE
FPU: none
CD-ROM: none
Software: Wordworth 4 SE Photogenics 1.2 SE, Personal Paint 6.4, Datastore 1.1 and TurboCalc 3.5 and two duff games.

What's missing: CD-ROM drive (£180), extra RAM and FPU, eg 4Mb RAM board with FPU (£150)

Total: £829

Pros: It looks nicer, you do get rather a lot of software for your money, Escom might give you £150 off, you can upgrade the processor to 28MHz or 50MHz for £50-£100 more

Cons: Not cheap! Not all CD32 games will work 100% but the hard disk is a bit small. If you already have a CD32 then this will now be redundant and in effect could be written off. You probably won't get much for a second hand CD32 unless you find some dedicated Amiga fan who really wants to buy one.

Expanded CD32 ProModule (£550)

(Assuming you have a CD32 or can get one for next to nothing)

RAM: 6Mb
CPU: 14Mhz 68020
Hard drive: 570Mb IDE
FPU: 33MHz
CD-ROM: Double speed

What's missing: software. Around £100 would get you a good selection of games and CD-ROM shareware collections.

Total: £650

Pros: It's all in one compact unit, it costs a damn sight less, all CD32 titles will be compatible, the hard drive is a useful size, and you can add an FMV cartridge.

Cons: It's a bit ungainly looking and there's a PC keyboard. Not all floppy games will work 90% games compatible internal drive, slowish CD-ROM drive, you have to buy your own software, no processor upgrade available yet and further expansion options are more limited than with an A1200.

ProModule

A500 | A500+ | A600 | A1200 | A1500 | A2000 | A3000 | A4000 | CD32

system requirements: You need a CD32

ease of use......................90%
Well positioned ports but a tad too tall and slippery.

performance......................90%
The addition of an FPU puts this in a league of its own for certain applications.

value for money..............87%
Internal disk drive and various hard drive/RAM/FPU combos are good.

OVERALL
A very capable CD32 expansion.
87%

Surf Squirrel

■ Price: £99.95 ■ Developer: HiSoft Systems ■ Supplier: HiSoft Systems© 01525 71818

AMIGA SUPERSTAR

The ever popular A1200 SCSI add-on gets an update. Time for a road test.

Rarely does a single item of third-party Amiga hardware reach the levels of general acceptance of HiSoft's Squirrel. This PCMCIA add-on has been sold and bundled by almost every Amiga hardware retailer to add SCSI capability to the A1200 most usually needed for a CD-ROM drive (and everyone needs a CD-ROM with CU's Super CD issues). Naturally the usefulness of SCSI doesn't stop there however. Zip drives, Jaz drives, SyQuests and even scanners are all possible once the Amiga is SCSI capable. The Squirrel SCSI also represented excellent value for money with the new addition of a fast serial port perfect for Comms users. Named the Surf Squirrel in reference to the term of 'Surfing the Net', the Surf Squirrel addresses one of the Amiga's shortcomings. The Amiga's internal serial port is only just up to the job of driving today's fastest modems. The Surf Squirrel, however, includes a high speed serial port via a small 9 pin (PC AT style) connector on side of the unit. For this reason, the Surf Squirrel is a substantially larger than the predecessor now know as the 'Squirrel Classic'. Naturally the Surf Squirrel also possesses the same SCSI cable trailing from the outside edge into a full 50 way SCSI connector. Here also the Surf Squirrel sees some improvements with an allegedly faster SCSI controller which may well be as attractive as the add-on serial port for many.

Take advantage

Firstly though, it's important to know what advantages the Surf Squirrel's high-speed serial port has over the internal unit. It's capable of a maximum rate of around 230,400 bits per second instead of the internal serial port's 115,200. It's not actually this aspect which is most important though, it's the fact that the Amiga's internal serial port only has a single byte buffer. This means that the Amiga must generate more interrupts and thus drag the CPU away from other important tasks more often than a serial interface with a significant buffer. This limitation is why slower Amigas can't reliably use higher serial rates and even if they can manage it, the system slows to a crawl with the increased effort of the interrupt overheads.

A fast serial port like the one present on the Surf Squirrel will enable most users to lock at the highest data rate their modem supports. This is much higher than the actual modulation rate of the modem. For instance, if the A1200 was even moderately accelerated, a 28,800 baud modem could be locked at 115,200 baud to the computer. Why? This is done because modems negotiate compression automatically on the fly. If sending ASCII text, for example, the sending modem will compress the data very efficiently and the receiving modem will decompress it. You'll notice nothing except that the apparent



data transfer is far higher than the theoretical maximum of the modem. For the Internet this becomes more important as downloading Usenet Newsgroups involves large amounts of uncompressed text. The same goes for the WWW in some instances. The other upshot of the Surf Squirrel's serial interface is that the CPU is freed up to do more important things such as decoding GIF files in the case of WWW browsing. Yes, it does make a difference.

Networking

Finally on the serial note, there's another application to having a high speed serial port. It could be used to network two Amigas together either with something like Sernet or AmiTCP/Envoy with a slip/ppp driver. It's rather technical but it works a charm over a serial link. In fact it's more reliable than the parallel networks links by a long shot. Again it would also use a lot less CPU time than parallel solutions and at 230,400 baud is not much slower and the cables between machines could also be a lot longer than a parallel system. This is an area that HiSoft's excellent Surf Squirrel manual doesn't cover which is a shame. The manual also comes with two floppy disks of essential PD archives in addition to a floppy containing the driver software and an excellent installer. The installer normally does full version checking and back-ups which is extremely welcome but it still deleted the Squirrel Classic driver (they aren't compatible). I'm sure HiSoft will fix this minor problem, meanwhile a back-up is advised.

When it came to doing some tests, the theory didn't quite match up with practice. The serial port on the Surf Squirrel did do better in the tests but the Amiga's internal serial port didn't perform too badly with a stock 28,800 baud modem, just so long as the Amiga internal serial port wasn't driven at 57,600 where errors started to occur which impacted negatively on performance. There seemed to be no reason why not to stick with 38,400 baud as even heavily compressible data like text was transferred quicker. The tests were performed while the machine was not under CPU load however. I expect that the Amiga would perform worse (including errors) when doing something such as decoding GIF pictures during web browsing but benchmarking such conditions would be ambiguous. The bottom line is that you're not going to save a fortune on telephone bills but it will make transfers and web browsing a little quicker. The Squirrel's serial port really isn't pushed unless it's being driven at the full monty such as when used for networking.

The SCSI test results were also surprising. I expected to see an across the board performance increase with the Surf Squirrel but found it actually under performs the Classic when it comes to small to medium buffer transfers. Mostly this is the kind in use with casual disk activity. The Surf Squirrel's SCSI did stroll out when it was given a large buffer to transfer to/from and this aspect of its performance means that it should perform markedly better for spooling large amounts of data onto SCSI devices. Back-ups, animation spooling and such forth should be much better.

SCSI transfer with PCMCIA was always going to consume virtually all the available CPU time but thankfully the Surf Squirrel actually leaves a little free where the Classic eats all it can get. The conclusion here must be that unless you're constantly spooling data to and from SCSI devices, there's no real reason to trade in your Classic for a Surf Squirrel on these grounds alone.

One new feature which could make the difference is that once the software drivers are loaded from power-on, it's possible to boot from any SCSI device unlike the Classic. Useful if you intend to do away with an internal IDE drive or boot from SCSI devices in particular.

Good choice

The Surf Squirrel is a brilliant expansion device for the A1200. Excellent SCSI capability, well thought out documentation and support software is certainly welcome especially considering the price. Problems have been addressed such as the compatibility with the Blizzard 1260 accelerator (you'll need a software update for the Blizzard too) and, of interest to many, the Surf Squirrel works with the HiQ Siamese SCSI network (to be reviewed in CU Amiga Magazine next month). The A1200 choice for SCSI is a Squirrel or an add-on for an accelerator board. The latter is still the best where speed and CPU time are paramount but with the Squirrel's excellent software support and the serial port, most Amiga users would be better served with the Surf Squirrel for their money. The high speed serial port will be just a bonus to most people but for some might actually be the reason for purchasing the card. It's the only way of adding a new serial port to the A1200 so it's bound to appeal to BBS Sysops and those seeking a cheap and reliable network system. The two combined really takes the Surf Squirrel back to the same excellent standard as the original Classic was when it was first released. As such I have no hesitation in awarding this unit top marks. Congratulations HiSoft on a worthy successor. ■

Mat Bettinson

Classic & Surf Squirrel SCSI speed

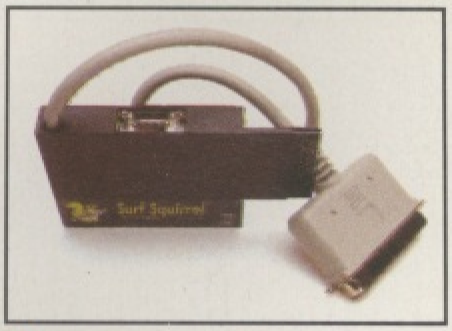
	Classic Squirrel		Surf Squirrel	
	Bytes/s	CPU	Bytes/s	CPU
Testing with a 4096 byte buffer				
Create file:	655872	0%	531815	18%
Write to file:	689664	0%	524144	23%
Read from file:	759808	0%	747520	8%
Testing with a 16384 byte buffer				
Create file:	990802	0%	94381620%	
Write to file:	979767	0%	1098402	12%
Read from file:	1063630	0%	1378628	9%
Testing with a 65536 byte buffer				
Create file:	1104539	0%	1374537	4%
Write to file:	1169993	0%	1405510	8%
Read from file:	1169993	0%	1767262	4%
Testing with a 1048576 byte buffer				
Create file:	1149474	0%	1497965	1%
Write to file:	1203876	0%	1581379	1%
Read from file:	1249792	0%	2023789	3%

Tests performed on a 50MHz 68030 equipped A1200 to a 1GB SCSI-2 Fast Seagate hard drive. CPU% refers to the CPU time free as a percentage. 0% means there is no CPU time available during the transfer for other tasks.

Surf Squirrel serial vs Amiga Internal serial

	LHA (835458 bytes)	Text (835153 bytes)
Surf Squirrel (115200 baud)		
Bytes/second	3251	4614
Transfer errors	0	0
CPU used	5%	6%
Amiga Internal (57600 baud)		
Bytes/second	3201	3906
Transfer errors	2	9
CPU used	24%	26%
Amiga Internal (38400 baud)		
Bytes/second	3251	3728
Transfer errors	0	0
CPU used	18%	20%

Bytes per second is the transfer rate for the entire transfer including retransmission of any errors. Transfer errors is how many times the transfer software (Termite with Z-Modem) detected an error. CPU used is approximate CPU time consumed during the transfer (not free as per SCSI test).



▲ **Excellent expansion device for the A1200 and good value for money too.**

SURF SQUIRREL

system requirements:
Amiga 1200 only

ease of use....................95%
Software installer is a breeze, the PCMCIA card just slots in.

performance...................88%
Slightly quirky SCSI performance but high speed serial port is a real boon.

value for money.............94%
All this for under a ton? PC cards cost more than this!

OVERALL
Brilliant A1200 expansion, ideal for the serious A1200 owner.
92%

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M006 BAT-DANCE REMIXED
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M018 THE XMAS SONG (disk) very funny
M025 MONEY FOR NOTHING-DIRE STRAITS HIT song
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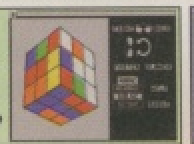
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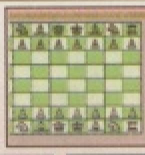




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G278 ARCADIA the best ARKNOID clone
G300 O-BIOD cross TETRIX and INVADERS.
G303 DIMENSION X 2 player LIGHT CYCLE GAME
G310 NEBULAR Excellent 3D shoot em up
G316 GALACTIC Excellent 8 levels arcade
G317 HYPER-BALL Speed ball +level editor
G320 GHOST-SHIP Very good 3D adventure
G325 BATTLEMENT hunch back of notcha
G326 MEGA GAME COLLECTIONS III 3 top games
G329 MADONNA NUDE PUZZLES for 18+ only
G331 GRAVITY massive space exploring game
G333 CYBER-NETIC Brillant 8 way blaster
G334 DONKEY KONG -(A1200 order code AGA296)
G335 CRAZY SUE II- best platform to date
G342 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE (& track editors)
G344 STAR-TREK similar to RAID2 but harder
G355 DOODY very cute & extremely addict
G358 WONDER LAND amazing graphic recommed
G362 DELUXE PACMAN + best pacman ever release
G367 CARD GAMES collection
G368 WIZARD-DOMAINS-dugeon type games
G370 KALATRIZ (notA1200) arcade tetriz clone
G373 AIR ACE II Very playable shoot em up
G384 OTHELLO best PD version
G388 MOUSE IMPOSSIBLE very addictive puzzle
G390 TETREN most polish Tetriz ever release
G392 STRIKEBALL brillant base ball clone
G399 TRAILBLAZER brillant (not A1200)
G400 FIGHTING WARRIOR like street fighter
G404 DOMINOES only one of it kind on PD
G406 TOTAL WARS -strategy like chess in space
G411 BATTLE CAR 2- 3D car racing
G431 NESTER CARD GAME- hours of fun for a quit.
G436 ROULETE amercan roulete excellent
G438 TRAILBLAZER 2 C64 conversion
G441 E-TYPE 2- very good asteroid great graphic
G443 OLEMPIAD DISK (2D) Olympic sport events
G445 DESCENDER GAME tank, search & desender
G446 OBLIDOX excellent Arcade/Puzzle game
G448 PARACHUTE JOUST quite playable
G455 CASTLE OF DOOM VG graphic adventure.
G460 WIBBLE WORLD GIDDY Large platform game
G467 CASH FRUIT- good fruit machines
G478 AMOS CRICKET cricket games
G488 EXTREAM VILONCE 2 player battle out
G489 ENGIMA MACHINE very challenging puzzle
G490 MEGA BALL 2 very playable break out clone
G491 BOUNCE & BLAST brillant platform 10/10
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G534 CASTLE KUMQUAT similar to Alien breed
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101 GAMES

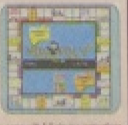
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G545 KUNGFU CHARLIES mix with platform brill.
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G657 AMOS LOADSA MONEY best FRUIT-MACHINES
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G668 AMOS CRICKET 2 New Amos cricket simulator
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G682 BANDIT MANIA - Brillant fruit machine demo
G685 PROJECT BUZZ BAR -Brillant asteroid
G689 GUN FIGHT (not A500/1.3)
G690 THE REAL POPEYE 64 (a500 1.3 only)
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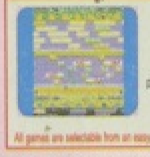
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G771 STAR WOID (2 Disk) brillant Thrust
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G774 TRICKLE TREAT -like DOOM on the PC
G775 FOOT-BALL MANAGER-new version
G782 SOLO ASSAULT 3D like Wing Commander
G783 SEED OF DARKNESS-Brillant graphic adven
G784 NANO FLY Superb explore game RECOMMEND
G785 THE GREAT GOLD RAID- very addicted
G787 ANT WAR V1.9 (LATEST) not 1.3
G788 ZENO-MORPH -Great grahic
G789 TASK FORCE very good MIND SHADOW clone
G790 GREEN FIVE Amazing 3D graphic like
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G792 MARTIAL SPRIT like Street fighter II
G798 6 EXCELLENT CARD GAMES collection
G809 BLITZ 2 fast action shooting games
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G811 TEMPORAL MISPLACEMENT-graphic adventure
G812 ADAY AT THE RACE-V.Goodhorse racing games
G820 BOULDER ORIGINAL with 80 level
G821 BOULDERDASH cave/level Construction kit
G822 BOULDER COLLECTION 2/3 150 level (2disk)
G839 BOULDER PACK with 640 level on 8 disk
G860 ALIEN NET WORK-new Spacing invader
G862 BATTLE FORCE excellent text adventure.
G863 GNU CHESS the best chess with 10 level
G868 SWORD OF YIGG Graphic adventure
G867 POWER-TETRIZ for 1 or 2 player
G869 SUPER SMASHING TETRIZ
G870 CHESS II & CHECKER One of the best around must for all CHESS or CHECKER player
G871 GRAVITY FORCE 2 1 or 2 player thrust clone
G872 SCHNEBITZ Commercial quality puzzle games
G875 DELEXE GALA v2.3(new) add new feature &bouns gamme + 2 player RECOMMEND. get it now
G876 THE KRILLIAN INCENDENT like ELITE2/Epic
G878 QUANTUM-Maze colect & escape type games

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G879 RAG TO RICHES -like MONOPLY
G884 WIPE OUT-mindless blasting gamse
G885 GODZILLA Another shootem up
G886 SUPER MEGA FRUIT- All new Fruit Machine
G888 DRIVING MANIAC 3D (fill vector likeIndi500) car racing- very fast. RECOMMEND
G889 PLANET FALL - Luner Lander clone
G891 BUCK TOOTH ADVENTURE Very good multilevel shoot/collect em up RECOMMEND
G892 PENGO 2- Maze type games. Recommend
G893 SUPER OBLITERATION Blast asteroid verysimilar to PANG 2 lot of weapon RECOMMEND
G894 SUPER INVASION II -New SPACING INVADER
G897 THE SHEPERD Brillant POPULUS clone. REC
G898 ALIEN GENOCIDE (2) Shoot aliens set in space.
G899 PUCKMAN. One of the better PacMan arround.
G900 SUPER-BATTLE ZONE 3D (not WB1.3)
G901 M*A*S*H a (ANTWAR 2) play very similar toLEMMING & WORM, with load of Weapon (Brillant)
G904 LAST SOLDIER (2) multilevel platform games
G905 CBBERTECH (2) exclient ALIEN BREED Clone
G906 HANGMAN any one for a game?
G907 ACE SPACE nice Platform games
G908 COLOURMANIA slide/Klatiz type puzzle games
G910 HARRY-HADDOCK- Brillant platformer games
G912 MANGLE FENDER -Brillant, Smash up othercar/tank ect to win. extremly addicted. get it
G913 ARCADE GAMES CLASSIC Vol 1 & 2 (2d)
G914 HELICOPTER-play like Desert strike
G915 COW WARS. Very addicted 2 player games
G916 ISLAND -Play like Monoply
G919 COP THE LOT Pro Latest Lottery preditor
G920 LOTTERY PROFFESIONAL This version use
G921 MONOPLY. (board games) The best version
G922 JET WILLY 3 - excellent platform games
G923 FLAMMING ENGINE-Superb car racing
G924 POWER MACHINES. Grehicaly brillant shoot
G925 SUCIDE-MACHINE Operation wolf style
G926 ZAXXON 3D Superb C64 3D blaster games
G927 BOING V3. Great platformer. recommend
G928 PUNTER-Animate horse racing games
G929 ARCADE JIGSAW (2d) include LION KING
G930 WHEEL CHAIR GLADITOR-Very fun to play
G931 NIMBLE-Brillant New arcade puzzle.
G933 BLACK DAWN 3- THE NEW BEGINNING (2) Superb 3D adventure. RECOMMEND
G934 RB ROCKET (NEW)very good rockets games
G935 BATTLE SHIP- the finest PD version
G936 LAST LAP - Fast car racing

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E020 WORLD DATABASE require (2+meg)
E021 STORY LAND II interact puzzle games rec
E022 LANGUAGE TUTOR teach you 4 language
E023 TALKING COLOURING BOOK talking Dpaint bril
E024 EASY SPELL II improve your kid speling
E025 SCRABBLE require 2-4player. brillant
E026 WORDS can help you solve the crossword
E027 OSWALD Very colourful large cartoon game
E030 EVOLUTION breed your own hybrid
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E038 AMIGA TUTORIAL 7 part tutorial
E039 COMPUTER CARE how to care about AMIGA
E040 GUIDE TO LOWER BACK PAIN tutorial the spine & how to avoid back pain. (recommend)
E041 KID ALPHABET display all alphabet letter
E042 FRACTION & SILOUEST maths & games excellent
E043 MATH MASTER teach/test you more on maths
E044 STEAM ENGINE V2 graphic & tutorial
E045 PETROL ENGINE tutorial & animate graphic
E046 GAS TURBINE ENGINE tutoria & anim graphic
E047 STIRLING ENGINE tutorial & anim graphic
E050 DREAM FOR ANGEL explain the meaning of dream E051 INVISIBLE WORLD brillant recommend
E052 FISH TANK turn your amiga into a FISHTANK
E054 DEMOLITION MISSION simple game for kid
E055 WORD POWER solve crossword puzzle ect good.
E056 WORM HOLE simple game ideal for children.
E057 APPLE CATCHER catch falling apple brillant
E058 CROSS MAZE & CRYPTOKING 2 excellent kid games E059 VERB QUIZ find the word & it related. Bril
E061 KING JAMES BIBLE (4d) complete bibles excel
E066 TARROT clairvoyant in a instance
E068 GALLOW fancy a games of hang man?
E070 MATH DRILLS teach all basic math skill Vgood
E071 ERROR INFO give info why your amiga crash
E075 WORLD-WAR 2 graphics tutorial on WORLD-WAR releate program eg simulate Starprobe/ molecube/ ect
E076 SCIENCE an excellent collection of science ideal for all who interesting or studies in science recommend. this pack come on 4 disks
E080 KIDPRIX great children paint programme.
E081 ASTROMY PACK- This is a mazing collection of programe relate to astromy. can help to locate certain or star position ect. must for anyone who studies astromy or hobby. great (4DISK)
E073 PICTURE & LETTER learn to reads- first step
E074 AMIGA BEGINER GUIDE tutorial on Amigas
E085 NODDY PLAYTIME demo >Very good
E080 KID PIX more excellent paint programes
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E097 BACK TO SKOOL vol 1 collection of the best
E098 BACK TO SKOOL vol 2 in education programe
E099 BACK TO SKOOL vol 3 & games. RECOMMED
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E101 WORLD GEOGRAPHY world with map & text.
E103 DISCOVERY OF THE ATOM. tutorial on the Atom (2D) E104 DESK TOP GUIDE TO MUSIC(3D) guide & tutorial
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E163 JAPANESE - teach you the japanese language
E164 PAINT IT (not A500 1.3) latest COLOURING BOOK
E165 KEY BOARD TRAINER An excellent tuping tutor
E166 WORD POWER- spellcheck/crossword solver/teach E168 CROSSWORD CREATOR-design crossword
E169 CHESS II & TUTOR brillant Chess II games
E170 HISTORY OF AVIATION Vol 1 Excellent disk
E171 CHILD FAVOURITE-Education prog
E172 ANIMAL LAND-Learn about animal
E175 FRANTIC GUIDE TO COMPUTER (2D) brillant & funny E176 CYBER PUNK 2 for cyberPunk freak only
E178 STAR-TREK & STARTREK NEXT GERENATION GUIDE 5 must for startrek fan contained 100s of picture from the startrek SERIES. 2
E181 SIGINTURE CREATOR customise your own signiture E183 VIRUS WORKSHOP V4 comprehensive guide
E184 IMAGINES VIDEO 2disk
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E210 LEARN & PLAY 3 Latest Education & Games
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E248 KID ONLY. 6 excelent game to play with
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KELOG LAND -brillant platform games
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GIGER TRIZ very playable 256 colour tetriz
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INFESTATION (3 disk) The ultimated AGA demo
CINDY CRAWFORD Vol II (2disk) amazing
VIDEO TRACKER AGA-ultimate demo maker
MAGIC WB EXTRA vol 1 & 2 (2disk)
GIF BEAUTIES Vol (11-18) 8 more girls disk
FRIDAY AT 8 another brillant AGA demos
ASSASIN MULTIVISION AGA pic viewing util
ALIEN FRENZE 2 player blasting +power up
BIG TIME SENSUAL (2disk) SPACE BALL 2
MASQUERADE 2disk brillant puzzle games.
RAM JAM 94 it cat be done (2disk)
EXPLIXIT 2 DEMO new effect welldone.
COMPLEX ORIGIN 2disk require 2 diskdrive
TREASURE OF TUTANKHAMUN- eductaion tool
LOVE 2 disk-simply brillant DEMOS
AGA UTIL 7 & 8 (2 disk) ,More USEFUL util

AGA234 KNOTTY-Stunning AGA sliding pictre puzzles
AGA240 LOTTERY WINNER hope fully will improveyour chance of winning a jack pot. GOOD-LUCK
AGA241-258 AGA GAME-GALORE AGA 01-18 lot of games
AGA251 PACKMAN AGA -the best pacman yet
AGA252 ROCKET PD - Super thrust clonebrillant graphic for 1 or 2 player
AGA253 REAL DEMO stunning special effect
AGA254 DIRT AGA Brillant 256 colour effect.
AGA255 DELIGHT EXPLORE exclent demo
AGA256 KEFEREN AGA Demo lot of effect
AGA257 MINOMIST RAVE great rave music.
AGA258 OXYGENE Fantastic demo
AGA259 INTEL-OUT another very good demo
AGA260 SOMEJUSTIC94 Demo of the monthbrillant whirl effect. RECOMMEND
AGA262 TO THE DEATH very good STREET-FIGHTER clone with very good graphic.
AGA263 GEORGE GALAXO (2disk) brillantmultilevel shoot/platform game. RECOMMEDN
AGA265 MISSILE OVER ZENON (2disk) Brillant3D missile commander with fantastic graphic
AGA266 TEAM-HOI DINO PLATFORM excellent dinoplatform Note:this disk was a commercial games
AGA274 MUSIC 2 SURVIVE 2disk 8 excellentmusic master piece. well worth getting
AGA271 RAVE MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE II (2disk)
AGA278 CHANNEL Z ISSUE 1 (AGA) (2disk)
AGA base disk magazines. RECOMMENDAGA disk magazine topic.demo/music
AGA285 WORKBENCH BACKDROP VOL 3
AGA295 DE-LUXE MONOPOLY- Board game.V addicted
AGA296 DONKEY KONG Arcade classic conversion
AGA297 BOMB PAC Extreamly good to play
AGA298 ROCKET 2 set deep underground brillantgraphic. even better with 2 player
AGA299 SCRABBLE-Now fully run on all Amiga
AGA300 MAGIC WB V2. Demo of version 2
AGA302 TUTANKHAM II(2) Education-Egyptian MUMMY
AGA303 PAMLA.ANDERSON.(2) 18+ only BayWatch Babe
AGA304 BODYSHOP V8 (3) more bikini beauties
AGA305 TIMEZONE (2) V.Good graphic adventures.
AGA307 DENTAWOLF dooms demo
AGA308 NAXIS -Really show what AGA graphic co do
AGA310 FEARS (2d)- dooms clone demo
AGA312 JINX (2d) Fantastic arcade puzzle
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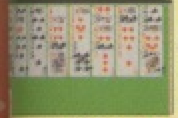


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X49	PAGE 3 GIRL
X70	GON GON GIRL
X71	TINA SMALL hot
X91	CINDY CALENDAR 95
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X97	HOT BABE 2
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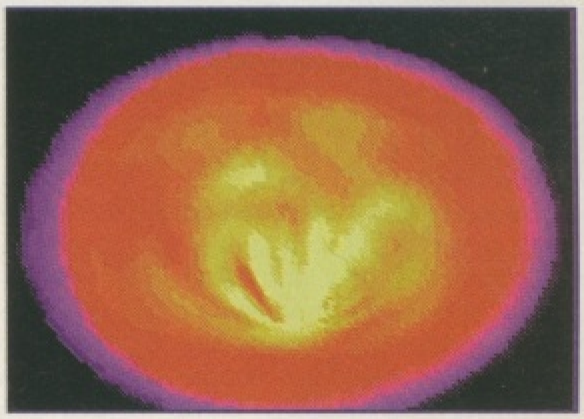
Scene Storm



Amazingly this is the first CD anyone has put together that really encapsulates the best of the demo scene. Endorsed and partly compiled by the much respected Spaceballs group, it's a feast for demo fans. Although there's no index, which is a shame as it would have made it easier to track down specific demos, everything is categorised neatly by the name of the coders and the competitions in which they were entered. Other areas include miscellaneous intros, modules, music disks and slideshows. Most of the material is taken from gatherings and releases from 1995. Almost all of the demos are ready to run straight from the CD, but unlike every other CD that attempts this, Scene Storm gives you information about each demo (including whether it will exit back to Workbench or just lock up the system) before you actually run them. This is excellent, as you can browse through those that exit to the system one after another and then take a look at the others when you don't mind re-booting after viewing them, although mysterious lock-ups and crashes still occur now and then.

One of the most notable inclusions is the 3D rendered sequence 'Flow' which is present in MPEG video form, complete with a three-frames-per-second MPEG player for AGA Amigas. If you're a coder yourself you'll be pleased to hear that there's around 50Mb of source code examples covering a range of demo and game-orientated assembly routines along with plenty of C source material too.

This is a must for all demo fans. Whenever you fancy a bit of audio-visual stimulation all you



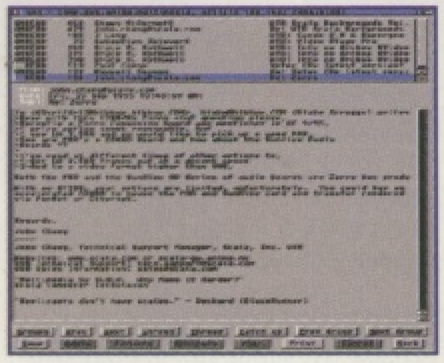
need to do is pop the CD in the drive and take your pick from one of hundreds of neat demos.

Available from: Active Software, PO Box 151, Darlington, Country Durham DL3 8YT. Price: £19.99 plus 75p P+P.

91 %

Net News Offline

In contrast to the likes of AGA Experience 2 and Scene Storm, Net News Offline is a step back into blatant shovelware territory. It's a compilation of message postings from Amiga related Usenet newsgroups. Usenet newsgroups are a valuable source of information and act as a global forum for users to discuss their favourite topics with other enthusiasts. Rather like a digital notice board, users can post messages to everyone else in the group and then await responses.



This CD is a database of messages mostly taken from the tail end of 1995. You can read through them all as if you were hooked up to them for real, but you can't respond to them or post any messages of your own. The loss of the interactive element reduces this to a sprawling collection of facts, opinion, waffle and gibberish. Sifting through this lot for relevant info is no mean feat and who really wants to read news that's over six months old?

The last straw is the software (GRn) that's used to access the text: it's slow, unstable and seems not to run in any screenmode other than interlace. Oh, and the CD demands 30Mb of hard drive space before you can use it. This would be enough to put off Internet newbies for life!

Available from: Active Software, PO Box 151, Darlington, Country Durham DL3 8YT. Price: £19.99 plus 75p P+P.

12 %

AGA Experience 2





One of the best ways to catch up on the latest from the PD scene is with a CD like AGA Experience 2. Like its forerunner it's a collection of animations, demos, slideshows, games, pictures, slideshows, modules, samples, disk mags, icons and utilities. So what's new about that? The emphasis is on immediacy, so almost everything is ready to run from the CD. A few of the demos need unpacking to floppies due to custom disk structures but most of it works with a double click.

The overall quality of the software is surprisingly high and there's no sign of fillers, although the uncompressed format means that there's not as much on here as your average Aminet CD for example. Some of the highlights include the modules drawer which is home to some house and garage mixes from Baby Dee, although the sound samples section is disappointing. Quite a few decent games are on offer, some of which are demos of commercial games which are exclusive to this CD. Demos account for a fair amount of data and these are presented in a similar form to those on the Scene Storm CD so you don't have to keep re-booting.

AGA Experience 2 is an excellent disc for anyone who wants to be able to dip into a cross-section of what happening on the PD circuit without having to mess around with archivers, hard drive installation and all that kind of stuff.

Available from: SAdENESS Software, 13 Russell Terrace, Mundesley, Norfolk NR11 8LJ. Tel: 01263 722169. Price: £19.99 including P+P.

89 %

Phase 4 - Desktop Video Dreams

The fourth in the EM Computergraphic Phase series marks a departure from the format of the previous CDs. These were primarily DTP-orientated collections which could also have been used for certain video and graphics applications, while Phase 4 is aimed directly at the desk top video producer.

To simply rattle off a list of the disc's contents would not really do it justice. How many times have you read that a CD is full of fonts, backdrops, modules, samples? However, the difference with this CD is that the strict quality control has lead to an excellent selection of files with no fillers. In addition, everything is presented in a very accessible form, uncompressed and with preview screens of all the graphics available from a mouse-click. Similarly, the icons for the samples and modules



launch player tools so you can test everything from the Workbench.

Bitmap fonts are included in sizes up to 168 point and all the font styles are included in bitmap, Intellifont and Type 1 formats, complete with preview screens. The modules are split into ten categories to make it



quicker to find one to suit the required mood and the sound effects are also segregated, although the sound quality isn't too hot.

The stars of the CD are the backdrops in the Custom drawer. These are subtle but imaginative backdrops that would lend a professional edge to text-based presentations. Some are montages of clip art and coloured backdrop textures, while others are simpler affairs. You also get a quality selection of more traditional backdrops of the marble and granite variety. All the backdrops are included as 800x600 JPEGs, PAL and NTSC sized 256 colour IFFs. This is an ideal CD for anyone into DTV, although the price is a bit steep compared to the opposition.

Available from: EM Computergraphic, 8 Edith Road, Clacton On Sea, Essex CO15 1JU. Tel: +44 (0)1255 431389. Price: £39.99 plus £1 P+P.

89 %

PD Scene

public domain

With a straw hat, a bit of hay between his teeth and an 'oo-aar, get orf moi laaand', Dave Cassidy checks out this month's harvest of games and demos.

Holodeck 10
slideshow

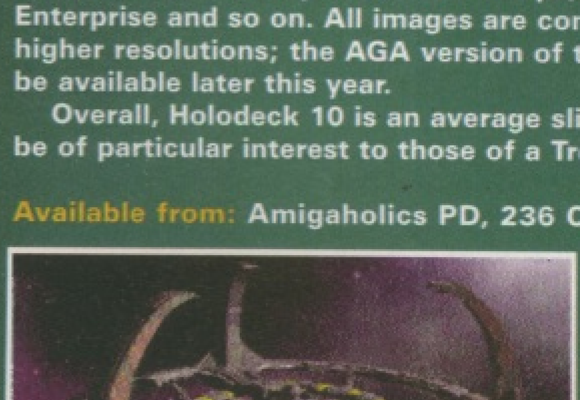


Infinite Frontiers have been producing Holodeck for about three years now and in that time they seem to have kept their high standard of Star Trek related graphics. Volume 10 sees that continue but there's a lack of zip or excitement about this slideshow. It seems to be a case of 'here are some pictures, aren't they pretty?' This can get extremely repetitive when you see the Enterprise for the umpteenth time. The disk's trackloader doesn't help things, as it often fails and leaves a jumble of pixels on the screen, although this may only just be confined to our review copy.

That said, the images are extremely nice, including DS9, Klingon Birds of Prey, Cardassian ships, Voyager, the Enterprise and so on. All images are converted down from higher resolutions; the AGA version of the slideshow will be available later this year.

Overall, Holodeck 10 is an average slideshow, but must be of particular interest to those of a Trek persuasion.

Available from: Amigaholics PD, 236 Chester Road North, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 1TE. Tel: 01562 68266. Price: £3 including P+P.



76 %

Fishy Fishy Enhanced
game

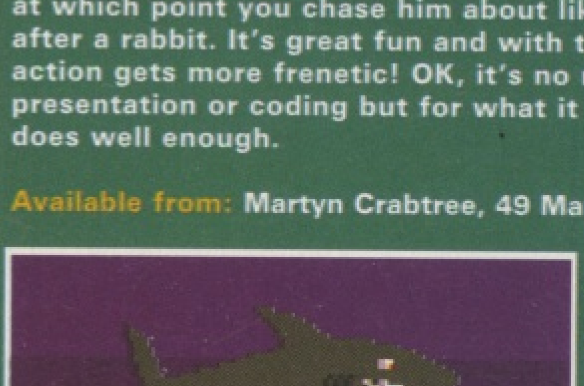




The essential ingredient, ladies and gentlemen, is gameplay. You can have all the fancy graphics and sound that you want, but without that intriguing element which pulls you back to a game time and again it will all be for nothing. Martyn Crabtree, the author of Fishy Fishy, has looked at this formula and used it well in his game. The graphics and sound may be exceedingly average, but the gameplay is top stuff.

The objective is to eat as many fish as possible, growing in size, until you meet Jak, the Mr Big Nasty Fish, whose tail you must nibble until he is obliterated. Sound bizarre? Indeed it is and that's where the fun lies! You end up screaming around the screen, chomping away at the marine life which swims past, avoiding the inedible killer sharks and squid, until Jak comes on, at which point you chase him about like a greyhound after a rabbit. It's great fun and with two players the action gets more frenetic! OK, it's no masterpiece of presentation or coding but for what it offers Fishy Fishy does well enough.

Available from: Martyn Crabtree, 49 Marlowe Road, Herrington, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S65 2JQ. Tel: 01709 821708. Price: £1.99 including P+P.



81 %

Once Upon A Time
demo

Since demo coders moved on from dodgy scrollers and ridiculous Bob competitions and began considering the design and feel of their productions, things have generally been a lot better. We've had Melon Dezign, Pygmy Projects, TRSI, Virtual Dreams and now, the makers of this demo, Ward. Once Upon A Time does include a ridiculous Bob section but that's forgivable, due to the design element. The whole demo is presented as an old-style black and white silent movie – crackly film effects and twinkly piano module in tow! It takes me back to watching Buster Keaton movies after I came home from school, and for that reason alone it's worth a look!

Available from: Hornesoft PD, 23 Stanwell Close, Wincobank, Sheffield, S9 1PZ. Tel: 0114 296 7825. Price: 65p plus 70p P+P.



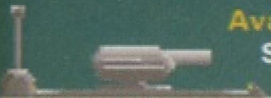
83%

Battle Duel
game

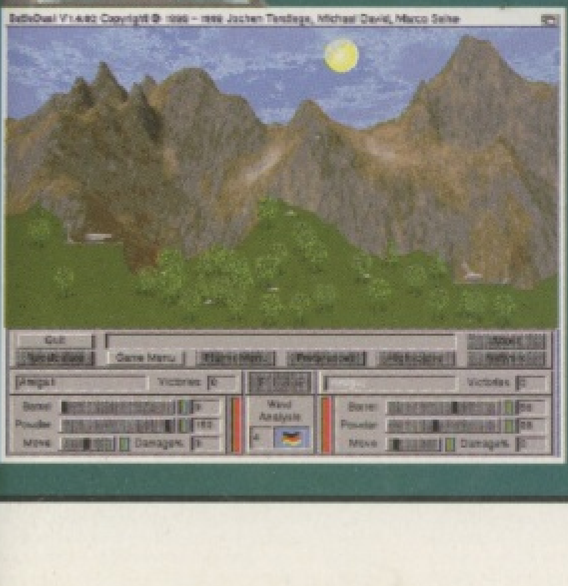
We reviewed an earlier version of Battle Duel some months ago and gave it a very respectable 81%. Not a great deal has changed with this newer version. There are still the four play modes of normal duel, two-player, and two tournament modes, the beautifully designed control system and it still multitasks.

The most important change to this game, though, is the addition of a network mode, including TCP/IP support, so that duels can be fought over modem links. This means that up to four friends in far-flung places can battle it out at once.

In all, although tank games are an old concept, this addition alone makes Battle Duel deserving of its high mark.



Available from: Hornesoft PD, 23 Stanwell Close, Wincobank, Sheffield S9 1PZ. Tel: 0114 296 7825. Price: 65p plus 70p P+P. HD required.

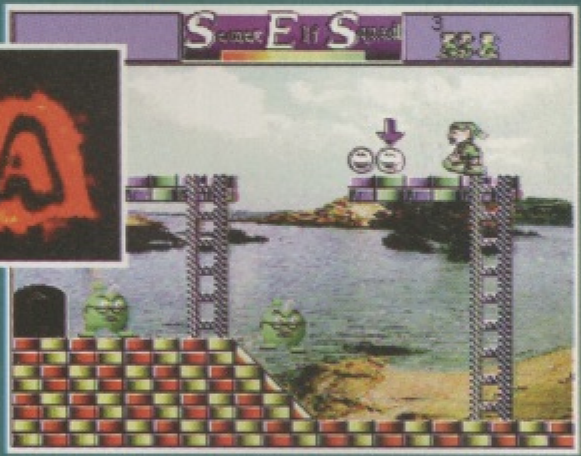




87%

Secret Elf Squad
game





This simple platform game is entertaining for a short time, but lacks the longevity which you might find in other productions of this genre. The basic idea behind this game is that you control an elf, roaming the screen picking up snowballs and killing off marauding apples, lemons and other pieces of fruit! Frosty fun and frolics include hurling snow at the fruit and turning them into giant snowballs, which roll around until they explode. Good fun, but annoyances – such as re-starting amongst nasties so you immediately die – detract from an otherwise enjoyable game.

Available from: Mon PD, 9 Lon-y-Wylan, Llanfairpwll, Ynys-Mon, Gwynedd, LL61 5JU. Tel: 01248 714591. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P.

70%

Tear Down The Wall
AGA demo

Although this demo starts with a Pink Floyd soundtrack and video, that's not all there is to it. The graphics are enlarged 3D animations, synchronised in time with the sampled soundtrack. Apparently there are 6Mb of sound in the whole production and the quality does suffer due to the extreme compression but it's more than listenable.

Moving into the more mainstream demo section, we have texture morphs on Gouraud shaded phongs, a few sturdy mirror effects, bump mapping, and a couple of solid modules accompanying the action. The demo will even run on an unexpanded A1200 but really needs an 030 to be watchable.

If you've got the silicon, Tear Down The Wall is definitely one you should check out.

Available from: Hornesoft PD, 23 Stanwell Close, Wincobank, Sheffield S9 1PZ. Tel: 0114 296 7825. Price: 65p plus 70p P+P.





91%

Short
AGA demo



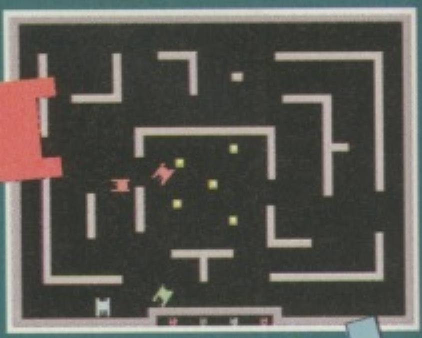
'Hard and fast' sums this one up. It begins and ends with image rotation, enlargement, and morphing, has a very quick stab at bitmap twists and shadowing and then simply stops. When it first boots it creates high expectations but these soon disappear once the credits roll. Something like this would normally be classed as an intro rather than a demo but this is over 800K, far from the average 40K allocated for most demo intros.

Available from: Mon PD, 9 Lon-y-Wylan, Llanfairpwll, Ynys-Mon, Gwynedd LL61 5JU. Tel: 01248 714591. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P.



63 %

Gilbo Games
game collection



Five games of varying quality are featured in this pack. One game worth mentioning is Infection where up to four players must move their blobs about, spreading their own colour to others, until the grid is filled. Whoever occupies the most squares wins. It's simple but enjoyable, with the slick presentation helping things move along nicely.

Then there's Mad Bomber, in which you attempt to catch the bombs which fall from above, is equally simple but far less polished and is not AGA compatible.

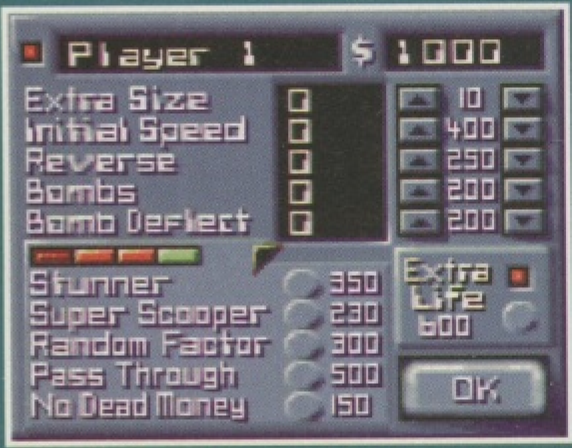
If two player games are your forte, then this pack offers two choices: Megasquad and Extreme Violence. In Megasquad the idea is to chase after or shoot down your opponent, which can produce some frantic action. This is also not AGA compatible. Extreme Violence sees you and a friend racing around a large area, picking up bonuses and hiding behind blocks, trying to shoot each other.

Finally, there's Missile Command – a simple clone of the arcade classic which suffers from jerky controls and simply bad coding, at least on AGA machines. Gilbo Games is a nice pack, well put together but unfortunately with too many drawbacks to be of serious interest to most gamers.

Available from: Hornesoft PD, 23 Stanwell Close, Wincobank, Sheffield S9 1PZ. Tel: 0114 296 7825. Price: 65p plus 70p P+P.

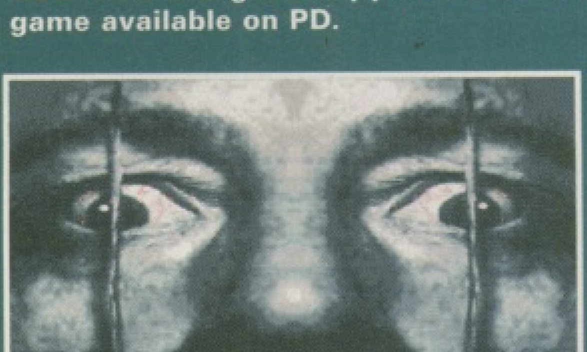
53 %

Sneech
game



There are plenty of Tron-style games, but nothing else is quite like Sneech. At first glance it looks complicated, but once you begin to understand the intricacies of the game it grows and grows on you until you're firmly locked in!

Features include viruses, blocks, transports, size pills, a reverse function, doors, shields, a learner mode, a league system and saveable high scores. What's more, up to ten people can play at once – yes, 10! It's all presented wonderfully well, with more promised for registered users in the future, so get in on the ground floor now and get a copy of the best new Tron-style game available on PD.

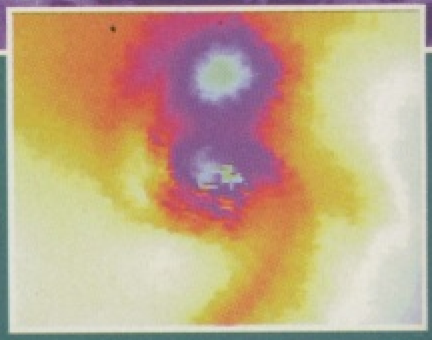


Available from: Mon PD, 9 Lon-y-Wylan, Llanfairpwll, Ynys-Mon, Gwynedd, LL61 5JU. Tel: 01248 714591. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P.

86 %

Jees!
AGA demo



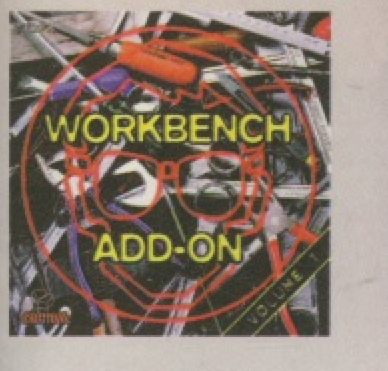


All the usual features are in this Mellow Chips production, ranging from swirly bitmap tunnels, through spheres and mirror balls, to translucent filled morphing vectors. It's all backed up with a bouncy Europop soundtrack. However, it can slow down horribly at some points and remains fairly short.

In all it's a nice collection of effects but offers little new.

Available from: Mon PD, 9 Lon-y-Wylan, Llanfairpwll, Ynys-Mon, Gwynedd, LL61 5JU. Tel: 01248 714591. Price: £2 plus 50p P+P. HD required.

74 %



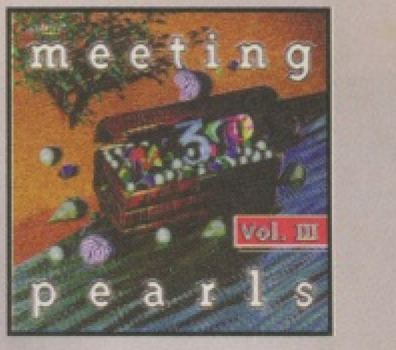
Workbench Add-On Volume 1

The Workbench Add-On CD-ROM is the ideal companion to your workbench. On this CD you will not only find the best programs, that are available for the Amiga, but you will also get them ready-to-run from the CD. In addition to this there is an installer script that installs the desired programs to your harddisk.
The CD covers all areas of interest, all, the programmer, the user, the creative and the gamer will find what they are looking for. On this CD-ROM there are many shareware programs, some of them at a special price, if you get registered. There is e.g. Shapeshifter for 40.- DM (instead of 50.- DM), in addition to this there is a 50 MB Mac partition, so that you can start playing around with Mac applications right away. Then there is PowerPlayer for 20.- DM (instead of 30.- DM), there are, of course, loads of modules with it, so that you can try it right away. AmiWin, the new X11-server for the Amiga is available for $40, instead of $50. You can sa ve more than 100.- DM with this CD. Therefore you only have to send in the appropriate page in the booklet to the author of the program. £24.95



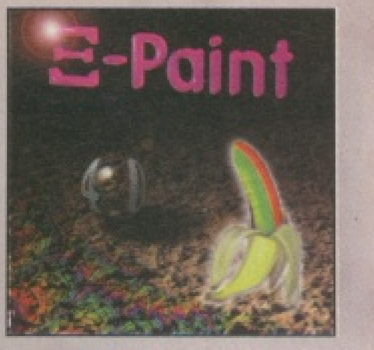
CDBoot 1.0

CDBoot is a fantastic new product that enables you to use almost any CD32 games on an A1200 or A4000 (with AT- or SCSI-CD-ROM drive and any filesystem). You can create a configuration file for each CD, containing information on the Joypad emulation. You can also save the highscore of each CD32 game. The usage and installation of CDBoot is very easy, also for beginners, due to the excellent English manual. Since the compatibility is very high, you can use 98% of CD32 games currently available. CDBoot is an excellent software solution for all Amiga-Freaks, who would like to enter the world of CD32 games! £34.95



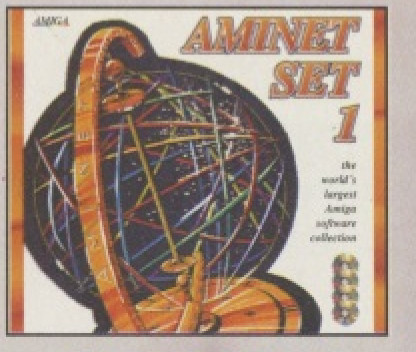
Meeting Pearls Vol. III

The Meeting Pearls Volume III contains 650 MB of the finest FD software via a special user interface, which has been created to allow you to find the program of your choice with ease. The contents: 10 MB Packer, Cruncher, Archive Programs · 3 MB CD-ROM Utilities · 21 MB Communication and Network Programs · 5 MB Debugging Tools · 29 MB Development Tools · 13 MB Floppy, Hard Disk ans SCSI Programs · 8 MB Educational Programs · 9 MB Games · 35 MB Graphics Programs · 39 MB Internet Movie Database, Updated Version · 7 MB Midi Tools and Programs · 27 MB Mods · 12 MB Music Programs · 21 MB Pictures · 13 MB AmiTCP and more for Networking · 60 MB Documentation, CD-ROM Databases, etc. · 96 MB PasTeX 1.4 - not previous available on any CD-ROM · 15 MB Utilities · 30 MB HTML-Pages · Collections of datatypes, benchmark programs, icons, programs for amateur radio and electrical/electronic engineering are also included. £9.95



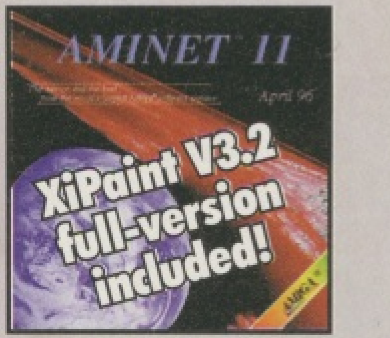
XiPaint V4

XiPaint 4 is the new version of the leading edge, 24-bit paint program. It's suited to the demands of novice and expert alike, and within a short time, you too will be able to produce colourful and creative art in 16.8 million colours. This version of XiPaint features animations as well as easy-to-use raytracing-capabilities.
Overview of Features: · Diverse paint functions including colour, contrast and saturation adjustment · Mask, outline, recolour and fill functions · Airbrush with adjustable spray functions · Light-table function for manipulating montages and animations · Text functions with anti-aliasing using Compugraphic fonts · Support for a variety of graphic formats · Unlimited Undo · Diverse manipulation of alpha channel · Supports many graphic cards · Layers to combine different projects · ARexx port · Drag & Drop colours · External filter module · Extensive documentation · 60 textures, 50 landscapes, 30 other pictures and many fonts included. £49.95



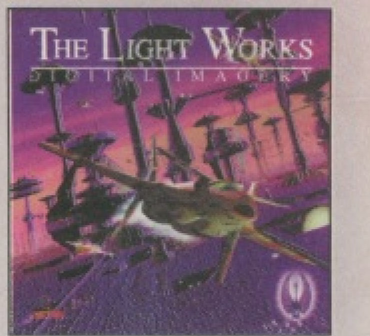
Aminet Set 1

Aminet is the world´s largest collection of freely distributable Amiga software. Up to 10.000 users access the vast archives ervery day and countless programmers publish directly via Aminet. Until recently access to Aminet was restricted to international network users. With Aminet Set 1, consisting of 4 CDs, the complete archive is published the first time. This CD-ROM-collection, which is dated January 1995, offers an almost inexhaustible reservoir of top-value Shareware. A wide variety of programs is included: Applications, Games, Demos, Pictures, Mods, Animations, Developer-Material, ... It contains approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 12.500 archives and you will enjoy the comfortable user-interface. £29.95



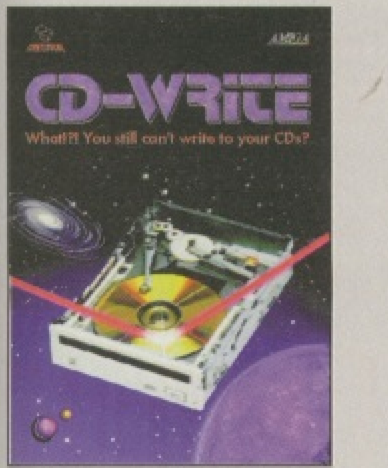
Aminet 11

Still available! £14.95



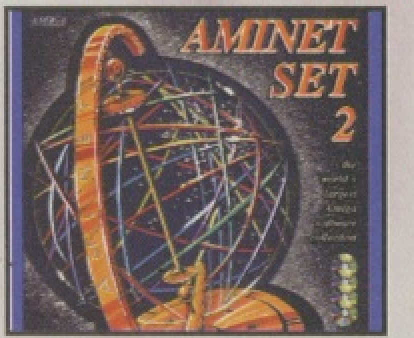
The Light Works

Raytracing - A fascinating area of the computer graphics. Pictures from the computer, perfectly rendered, fascinate people all over the world. The Amiga was the first computer to be used for raytracing, and today it is still a leader, with many high quality programs. A real artist of raytracing is Tobias J. Richter from Cologne/Germany, whose detailed objects stun the people. Especially his space ships of famous science fiction films are used to demonstrate the capabilities of a raytracing program. The objects are highly detailed and extremly realistic due to the application of complex surface textures of the models. Until now it was difficult to acquire these objects in order to create ones own scenes or animations. £29.95



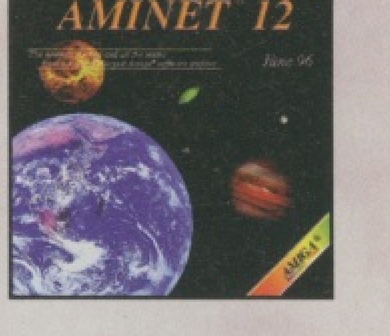
CD-Write

What?! You still can't write to your CDs? CD-ROMs have long been an essential part of Amiga computing. Many users already own a CD-ROM drive, and the number of software packages available on CD is increasing steadily. Until now, though, it was not possible to write to CDs. We have solved this problem with our new revolutionary product: Ralph Babel and Stefan Ossowski's Schatztruhe are proud to present what can be considered a marvel of technology: CD-Write enables you to virtually write to CDs with an ordinary CD-ROM drive. From now on, you will be able to write, delete, and modify data on your CDs. This product will take you into a new era, and you will be able to utilize CD-ROM technology to its fullest. £44.95



Aminet Set 2

AMINET SET 2, dated November 1995, consists of approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 12.000 archives. Whether you like applications, games, communications or programming, the SET gives you all you need. Easy to use index files and search facilities make accessing it a pleasure. £34.95



Aminet 12

Aminet CD 12, dated June 1996, consists of approximately 1,1 gigabytes of software in 3800 archives. Since the release of Aminet CD 11 more than 710 MB new software has appeared. The current edition has a special focus on mods, more than 1000 music-modules from the internet were included. User friendly access software makes the Aminet CD 12 a pleasure to use. £14.95



NetNews Offline Vol. 1

NetNews Offline Vol. 1 is the first disk of a new bimonthly published series of Amiga CD-ROMs which contains all Amiga-related newsgroups from the internet. Every volume features about 50.000 articles which contain hot rumours, important information about all aspects of the Amiga, press-releases, discussions and flame wars, ... A newsreader is included. NetNews Offline is the cheap alternative of getting in touch with Usenet. £14.95



FreshFish 10

The FreshFish CD-ROM-series, produced directly by Fred Fish, provides Amiga users with hundreds of megabytes of the latest freely redistributable software. Published approximately every two months, each volume is a two CD set containing new submissions since the last volume, as well as an ever growing selection of tools, libraries, documentation and other useful material that is updated with every release. £17.95



Gamers' Delight II

This CD contains 1070 games for the Commodore Amiga from different categories. Action, Jump & Run, Card Games, Puzzles, Strategy Games - a whole range of computer entertainment awaits! Gamers' Delight will hold you captivated for hours and guarantees long-lasting pleasure. 70 games are commercial versions - no public domain & no demos! This CD can be run on any Amiga with CD-ROM drive,1 MB free memory and Joystick/Joypad. £26.95

All products are available in your local Amiga-shop or through national mail-order-companies

SCHATZTRUHE

International Distributor:

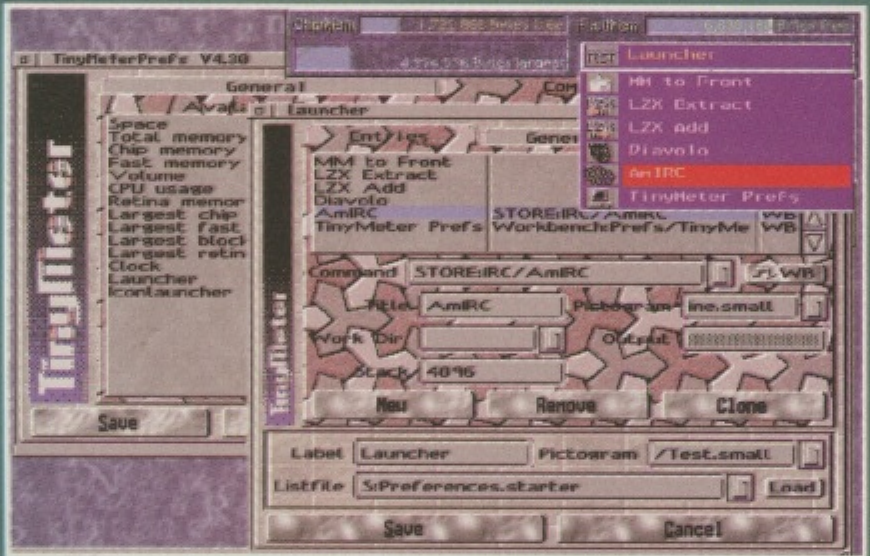
G.T.I.

GTI
Grenville Trading International GmbH
Zimmersmühlenweg 73
61440 Oberursel · Germany
Tel +49-6171-85937
Fax +49-6171-8302
EMail: Compuserve 100336,1245

PD Utilities

Anything and everything can be found in the world of public domain: from the downright bizarre to the absolutely essential. And they all cost less than a packet of cigarettes. Mat Bettinson peruses the pick of the crop.

Tiny Meter
system monitor and program launcher



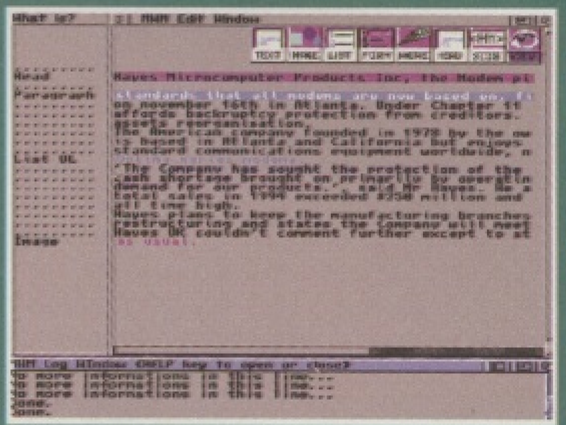
This is a tool of two halves. First of all there's the system monitor. This is based on Magic User Interface as you can probably tell from the screenshot. It's not exactly brimming with features but it does offer displays for Chip and Fast memory status, CPU usage (which surprisingly will use Executive too) and a clock.

Next there's the program launcher. The aim of this baby is to save time. Its purpose is to serve as a short cut for loading your most often used programs in a similar fashion to Tools Daemon and Launch Pad. It comes with hundreds of little icons which can be placed in its pop-up menus to brighten things up. Almost everything can be configured from the MUI prefs program, which helps make this little pair a very handy set of tools. Now I've set it up to fit in my system, I think it's there to stay and I suspect you'd do the same. With the main program only having a 40K overhead it hardly soaks up space. Well worth a look.

AminetPath: util/wb/TinyMeter_V430.lha 362K
Available from: Your Choice PD, 39 Lambton Rd, Chorlton, Manchester M21 0ZJ. Tel: 0161 881 8994.
Price: £1.00 per disk of Aminet files plus 70p P+P.

89%

Magic Web Maker 1.05
WWW/HTML authoring tool



Even if you're not on the Internet, you've probably heard of the World Wide Web or WWW. When you download and display web pages on your Amiga they can look amazing, but in fact all you download is an encoded text file and some pictures. The pages are drawn up on your machine according to the codes in the text file. In essence this is a programming language called HTML and surprisingly it's also useful even if you're not on the Internet. WWW pages can be viewed locally from disk with any Amiga WWW browser (Voyager or IBrowse are two). It's a wonder people don't create disk magazines in HTML rather than silly custom formats. Then the entire documents could be read by anyone on the Internet too.

Magic Web Maker gives you the chance to make your own WWW pages without knowledge of the HTML language. It's simply a matter of loading in your text, selecting a line and adding a function via a menu or icon. MWM brings up requesters to set the various options and the details are displayed in a little log window along with a shortened tag on another window to the left of the text view. It's a superb idea but lacks a little in implementation. Die hard HTML heads like me still prefer to do it 'in the raw' via a text editor but MWM will allow anyone else to get started in the WWW revolution. If you're interested in the WWW revolution, get a Browser and MWM.

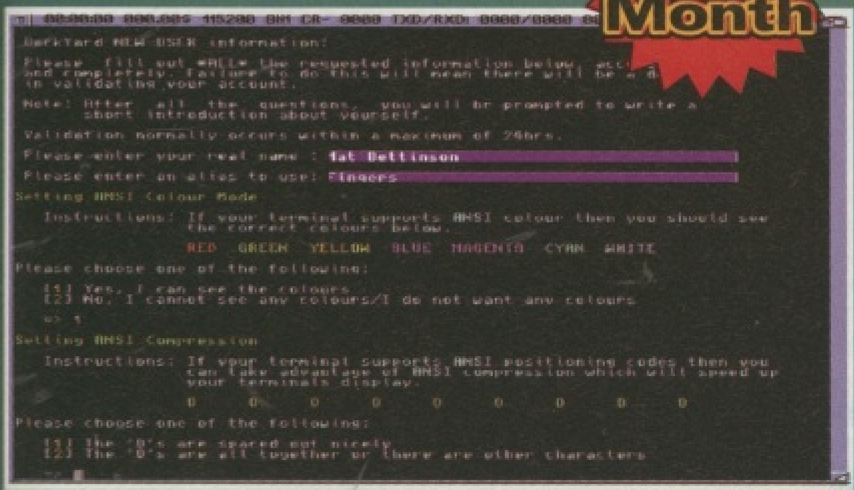
AminetPath: comm/net/mwm105.lha 77K
Available from: Your Choice PD, 39 Lambton Rd, Chorlton, Manchester M21 0ZJ. Tel: 0161 881 8994.
Price: £1.00 per disk of Aminet files plus 70p P+P.

79%

Dream Term

comms package

Utility of the Month



Given that last month's cover-mounted Termite Demo was time restricted and the CU Amiga/InternetFCI Internet installer package ended up being much larger than we thought, readers may have had troubles running them both. However, there's a few good PD terminal packages around and this effort called Dream Term is no exception. Actually Dream Term is a little odd in that it uses MUI and has several ways of accessing the same configuration bits. You can use the menus just like traditional terminal packages or you can access a single large and complex MUI GUI (say that 10 times fast) to change the functions. Otherwise it's a perfectly competent terminal package which comes with the necessary libraries and such-forth for various terminal emulation modes and file transfer protocols (of which it supports the lot). If you've got MUI and don't mind using it for something as simple as a term package then Dream Term is a powerful and fast option. Highly recommended.

Available from: OnLine PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335.
Price: £1.00 per disk of Aminet files plus 70p P+P.

91 %

Beavis and Butthead

clip art

Thirteen year old year old Kieran Holt has done a fine job of reproducing Rick Parker's work on the MTV cult American cartoon Beavis and Butthead. The pictures have an almost pencilled quality to them and several items are included on very large IFF bitmaps. The images are colour but are not very clean in that stray pixels and rough edges are present everywhere. All the same, if you're a B+B fan or particularly need some pictures of Beavis and Butthead up to their usual antics then this disk will do the job nicely.

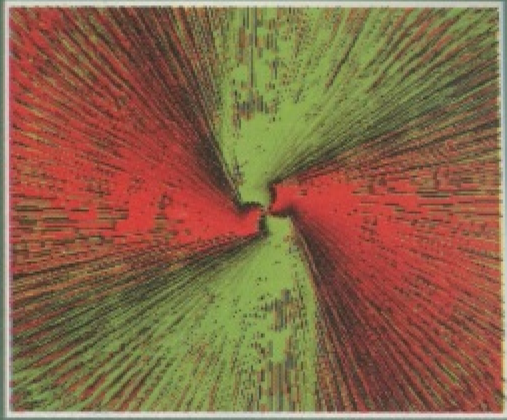
Available from: OnLine PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool, L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335.
Price: £1.00 per disk of Aminet files plus 70p P+P.



75 %

Colour Junkie

audio visual effects



Colour Junkie generates some psychedelic patterns, supposedly in sync with an audio source fed into a sampler. At first it seemed to do its own thing with or without any sound input but some tweaks to the configuration page improved the effect considerably. It supports several different samplers and the calibration can be checked with a simple waveform display. Pumping one of Dr Horgan's banging techno mix tapes into this program finally yielded some impressive results.

I'm not dead keen on it being entirely based on line drawing but it's certainly worth a look if the idea of music synchronised psychedelia lights your fire. Shove it through the biggest TV in the house and let it take control (unless you're prone to epileptic fits of course).

Aminet path: gfx/misc/ColourJunkie.lha 64K
Available from: Your Choice PD, 39 Lambton Rd, Chorlton, Manchester M21 0ZJ. Tel: 0161 881 8994
Price: £1.00 per disk of Aminet files plus 70p P+P.

78 %

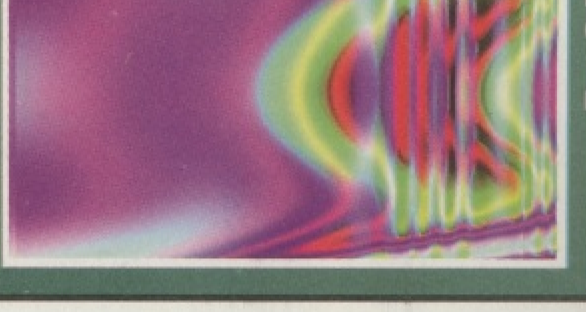
Picture This 4

graphics tools

There are not too many programs on this disk but it's worth picking up for a couple of gems, most notably Visage which is a very nice OS 3.0 only picture viewer. What's nice about it is the total stability, datatype support and built in fast decoders for IFF and GIF. It's happy to display on any monitor or screen it's directed to which means it should work nicely with all graphics boards that have a decent RTG system. Picture This 4 also has a bog standard datatypes viewer. I'm not sure exactly what the point is though, since this is the whole idea of Multiview ...

The other little gem is a port of a graphical utility called QBist. It uses some fancy algorithms to generate smoothly coloured pictures (internally 24-bit) of which it draws several slightly changed variations. You can then spawn any of the boxes together to produce a genetic 'child'. The bottom line is it's quite fun and can produce very nice JPEG pictures as seen here but otherwise it's a bit temperamental. If you need a viewer, get this disk for Visage. The rest is an added bonus.

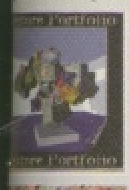
Available from: Roberta Smith DTP, 190 Falloden Way, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6JE. Tel: 0181 455 1626. **Price:** 90p plus 50p P+P.

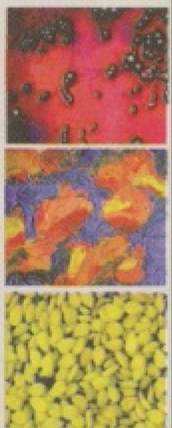


88 %

[T]EXTURE PORTFOLIO £27.99

[This c]ollection of textures has taken a staggering 5 years to complete. [Phant]asmagoria are a professional graphics company, based in Bristol. [They] have been providing textures and backgrounds for video, ray-tracing etc. This CD consists of 500+ 24Bit backgrounds and textures, it includes the very high quality 24Bit JPEG files for video, graphics and multimedia work, Targa's for PC raytracing and GIF format for video titling applications. The various sections include Abstract - Phantasmagoria, Abstract - Oil Paints, Abstract - Mixed, Animal Skins, Clouds, Fire, Food, Masonry, Rock, Metal (6 sub-sections), Water, Wood Bark, Wood Grain, Miscellaneous. No wasted space on this CD-Rom - a collection of extensive tutorials. This CD comes with a full colour multi-page reference booklet for every single texture. An ideal complement to a raytracing CD such as Light Rom 3 etc. **Please note that all these textures are exclusive to this CD-Rom and cannot be found on any other collection.**

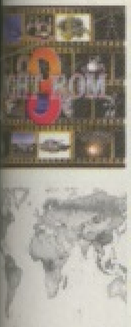






[L]IGHT ROM VOLUME 3 £38.99

[Ligh]t Rom 3 is the most ambitious issue to date, consisting of 3 CD Rom's! Rom 1 is filled with thousands of Lightwave objects and scene files, building upon previous issues. Rom 2 contains huge collections of 3D objects in different file formats including Imagine (175MB's), 3D Studio (100MB's), Sculpt (30MB's) and Real 3D (7MB's). It also includes 700 textures in the JPEG format and a Video Toaster directory with wipes and CG fonts. Rom 2 also has a collection of 3D landscapes in the Lightwave, Imagine and 3D Studio file formats and a collection of useful Amiga and PC PD programs. Rom 3 is a "DEM ROM", a bonus CD-ROM containing over 1000 digital elevation maps for use with VistaPro, Scenary Animator and World Construction Set (available from Blittersoft) on any platform. All Lightwave objects, textures and DEMs on this collection are represented with thumbnail renderings. Michael Meshew, the author of Light Rom 1, 2 and 3, has produced a CD that offers the World artistic talent for a reasonable price.



Texture Portfolio & Light Rom 3 for £59.99

NFA AGA EXPERIENCE - VOLUME 2

So you were impressed with AGA Experience volume one?! So was the Amiga press! Hot on its heels comes a brand new release.....NFA AGA Experience volume 2! Following the same trend as the first, but offering even better value for money, it contains loads of new and exclusive AGA material to show friends the capabilities of your AGA machine, at a low, low cost. This contains AGA utilities, demos, games, tools, slideshows, animations and more! Compiled (in a similar style to Zoom release 2) within a Magic WB environment, it makes access superbly easy. This CD is going to sell like hot-cakes at the World of Amiga show - order your copy before stocks run out!!

Many New Features :-



FASTER DMS's - The DMS files now unpack more quickly, so you can get at the files you want even quicker! Plus the MagicWB environment makes it instant!
MORE READY-TO-RUN SOFTWARE - Now there is a lot more software ready to run straight from the CD. There are less troublesome DMS files than before!
MORE FLOPPY DRIVE FRIENDLY - Users without Hard Drives will find this CDworks better than the first one. We have even included boot-disks for most ofthe popular A1200 CDROM drives!
LESS 'BABE' SLIDESHOWS AND PICTURES - We have not included any of theboring and unoriginal swimsuit slideshows that you will find on other inferior CDs. These are really just padding, and we would rather use thespace on this CD to bring you only THE BEST software around!
A SELECTION OF UN-DMS PROGRAMS - We have placed every program we couldfind to decompress DMS files on the CD. This makes it a piece of cake to getat the DMS files - either through double-clicking in Workbench or theinterface of your choice. It's so easy!
MORE CD32 FRIENDLY - Due to some bugs in the Amiga operating system, the first AGA Experience did not work perfectly on a networked CD32 - we have hopefully worked around these problems, and the result is a real treat for CD32 owners!
ALL NEW AGA-ONLY SOFTWARE - Since the release of the AGA ExperienceVol 1, there has been a massive amount of new, top-quality AGA software. Virtually nothing has been repeated on this CD from the first one. We now have many new sources of software, to ensure a constant stream of quality titles.
NEW USEFUL UTILITIES - After hearing some of the comments from the magazine reviewers, we decided to create a drawer containg useful tools. Insidethe 'Useful' drawer, you will find an icon to copy DMS files to RAD: instead of DF0: (speeding it up enourmously), TUDE (to make more demos/games run on 030+),and some boot disks for this CD! Something for everyone...PLUS MUCH, MUCH MORE!! - Like exclusive game demos from the Amiga' stop publishers, Exclusive version of AWeb for HTML Web page-like docs, More detailed contents listings, compatibility details on the AGA demos etc. etc.

new release! - out Middle of April!! £17.99

OH YES........MORE WORMS!



Over 50,000 copies of this superb game were sold before Xmas, and these were just Amiga sales. Worms is one of the most popular games of recent times across Europe. This CD contains an extensive number of enhancements for both the Amiga and PC version of Worms. It contains maps (over 1000 extra levels), a patch update to offer enhanced features to the original game. This is volume one in a forthcoming series. If you are an Amiga or PC Worms fan then get this now!

AMIGA AND PC COMPATIBLE £9.99

HORROR SENSATIONS



Horror Sensations is an innovative new multi-format CD-Rom containing anything and everything to do with horror! Includes thousands of images and pictures from films ranging from Hammer House of Horror through to very recent blockbusters. Also contains the goriest of animations, horror stories, samples (i.e. screams, groans etc), haunting music tracks (.mods). Designed for use on the PC or Amiga this CD will delight any horror fan with masses of material!

AMIGA AND PC COMPATIBLE £18.99

THE AMINET COLLECTION

Aminet 6	June 95		£-------
Aminet 7	August 95		£12.99
Aminet 8	October 95		£12.99
Aminet 9	December 95		£12.99
Aminet 10	February 96		£12.99
Aminet 11	April 96	[Out Now]	£12.99
Aminet 12	June 96	[Pre-Order]	£11.99

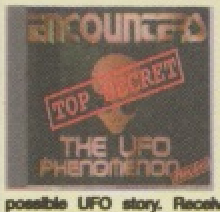
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Art Gallery

Lisa Collins, the luvvie of the Amiga art world, showcases the start of the readers' Summer collection.







Mark Sheeky (who is currently looking for a job in the games industry – hint) sent in the above picture and the two insets top right. These fine examples were rendered on an 6Mb A1200 using Imagine 3.0 and Photogenics.



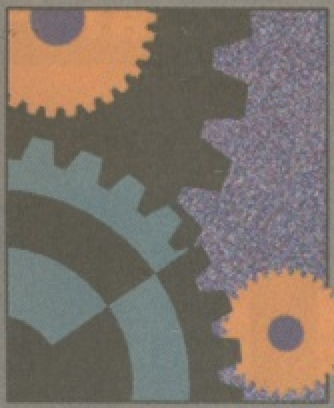


Gabriel Gaminde returns to the art galley pages with one of his summer collection. Impressive stuff.



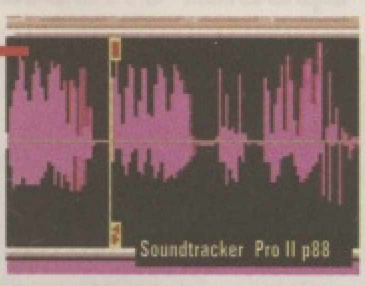
Auburn Hodgson,Cleveland sent in this picture of Concorde and the picture (top) of a rather smart Porsche. Both were hand drawn on an A500 using DPaint3.

AMIGA workshop





Imagine 3.0 p84



Soundtracker Pro II p88



Sound Lab 90

Regulars

True to form there's more learning and education packed into these pages than the Collins' Encyclopedia (almost). We continue our tutorials on Imagine, Scala and Soundtracker. And there's our usual helping from the font of knowledge in the shape of the regular Q&A pages, ARexx Masterclass and FAQ. Plenty of food for thought and fodder for your brain.

Special FX

Imagine 3.0

PART 6

Make sure your animations stand out from the crowd with a little help from Imagine's special effects.

Last month we used the action editor to create an animation: a sequence of rendered frames which contained movement. We created an animation of a moving sphere and made it move past the camera whilst the camera automatically 'tracked' it to keep in the centre of the frame. This month we'll look at some of the special effects which Imagine offers. These make it simple to make your animations more exciting and dynamic and yet require very little effort on your behalf.



▲ To get started, make a simple animation with a recognisable object. The simpler the better, although don't use a Primitive Sphere object as it is immune to most effects. I'm using an aeroplane object and I'm moving it towards the camera slightly. You should know how to do this from last month's tutorial.



▲ Go to the action editor. You'll see that every object has four F/X slots. These are where the effects are inserted, and yes: you can have up to four at once! On the F/X 1 slot of your key object, use the ADD button to add an effect. Make it active for all the frames. If you don't get a list like this, make sure the default path is 'effects'.



▲ Select an effect. For an exciting starter, find EXPLODE. When you select it, you'll see the effect window pop up. Here you can choose various settings for your chosen effect. You'll see the range (here 1 to 10) of frames that the effect will be applied to, as well as specific options. Use those shown.



▲ Use "Save Changes" and return to the Stage Editor. If you look through the frames one by one (use the "Amiga and c" key to jump to frames) you'll see the wireframe representation of what is happening. Here is a composition of some of the wireframe images.



▲ That's how simple it is! There are quite a few different effects, and all can be applied to your objects. Obviously you'll want to use them over and over but if you can keep them for special occasions or their effectiveness will wear off.

A little something extra sir?

There are so many special effects we can't show you them all but on the opposite page we're having a damn good try. However, there are a few effects that we didn't have space for. For example, the 'Flash' effect switches the bright attribute of an object on and off. If the object is a flat, yellow rectangle acting as a window on a space ship for example, it will blink on and off.

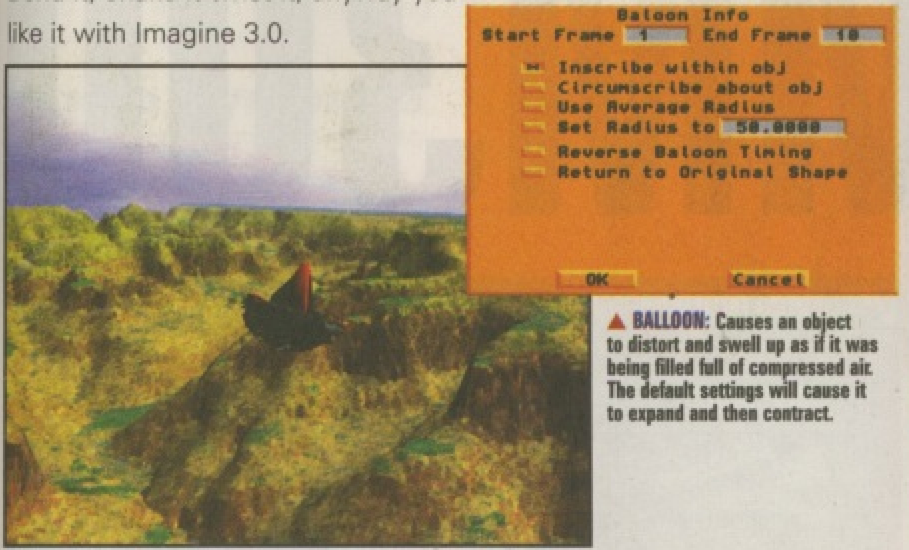
More complicated lighting effects require the use of real lightsources. 'Grow' is rather tricky to describe and so we'll save it for another time. However, it can be quite amazing: how about a neon-sign which traces out your name? Or a plant which grows up the wall of a house exactly the way you want it to? Remember too that you can apply multiple effects to the same object, so it can rotate, flash and explode all at the same time. Now feast your eyes on the effects that we had enough room for.

Imagine newsflash

A new version of Imagine is now available with two important new features. The first is support for CyberGfx (the third party video card driver system) and the second is ARexx. The addition of an ARexx port opens up lots of new possibilities – from automating tedious tasks to making incredible animations. With an ARexx script you'll be able to define object positions with incredible precision: for example, using mathematical equations to create bizarre organic shapes. Good news also for those with Internet access too – Impulse, the creators of Imagine, now have a Web site, http://www.coolfun.com, up and running. Well worth a visit.

Special effects

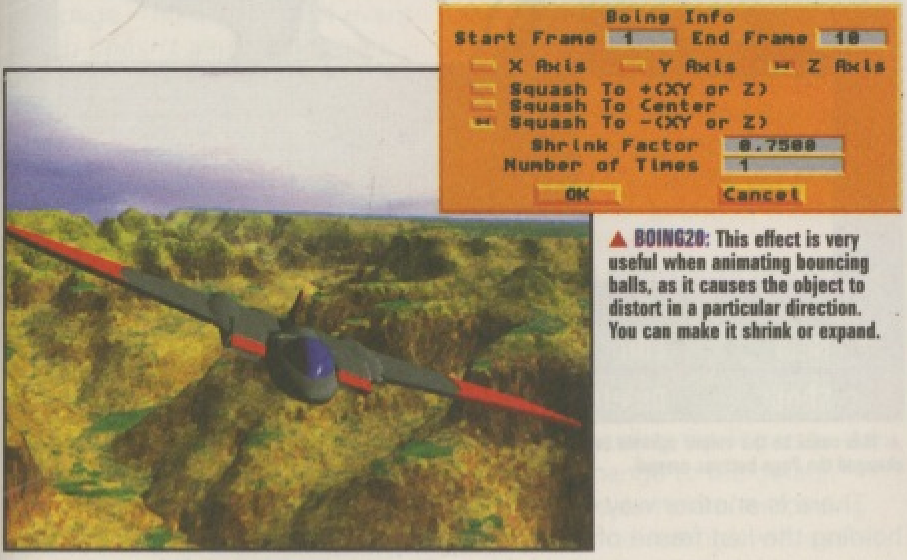
Bend it, shake it twist it, anyway you like it with Imagine 3.0.



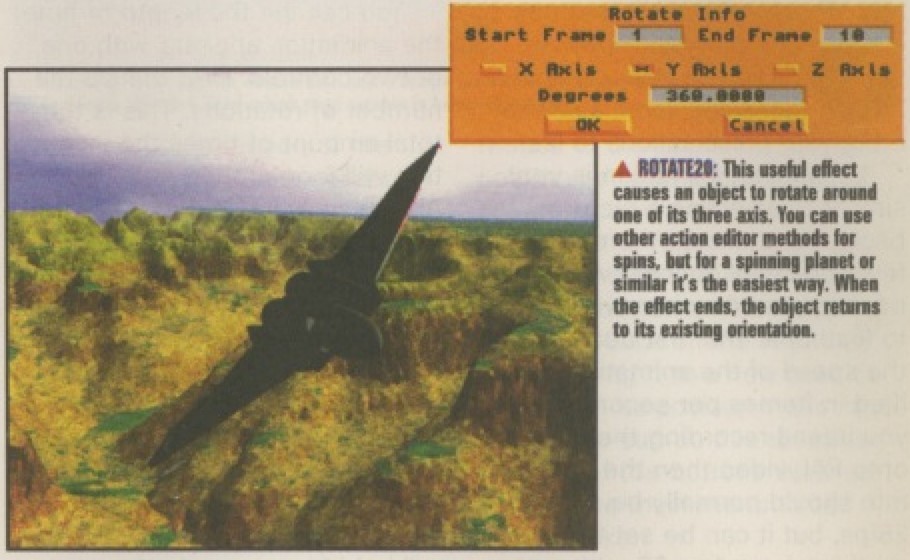
▲ **BALLOON:** Causes an object to distort and swell up as if it was being filled full of compressed air. The default settings will cause it to expand and then contract.



▲ **FIREWORKS:** This works in a very similar way to Explode, except you can make the exploded parts start to drift downwards (as though gravity was pulling them down) and also twinkle.



▲ **BOING20:** This effect is very useful when animating bouncing balls, as it causes the object to distort in a particular direction. You can make it shrink or expand.



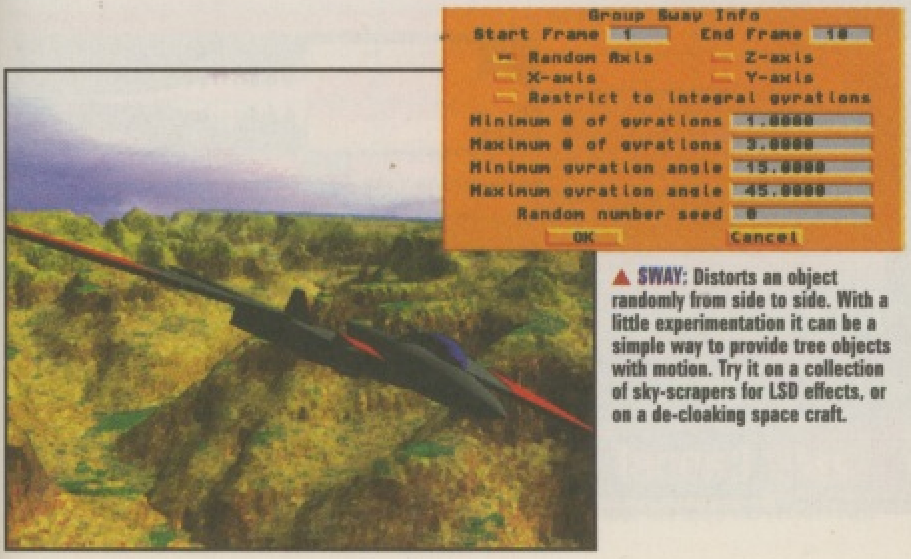
▲ **ROTATE20:** This useful effect causes an object to rotate around one of its three axis. You can use other action editor methods for spins, but for a spinning planet or similar it's the easiest way. When the effect ends, the object returns to its existing orientation.



▲ **PARTICLE:** Converting your object to particles makes for an interesting time. With this effect, you can create rain or wind effects by making the splinters of object scatter in various ways. Worth experimenting with.



▲ **SPIKE:** This looks like a rather bizarre effect, but could be useful for creating dramatic effects. Spike makes an object, well, spikey with random bits poking up. Looks great for making plasma weapons with bright, gaseous objects. I wonder if you could use this effect to 'spike' someone's drink? (Boom, boom – sorry!)



▲ **SWAY:** Distorts an object randomly from side to side. With a little experimentation it can be a simple way to provide tree objects with motion. Try it on a collection of sky-scrapers for LSD effects, or on a de-cloaking space craft.



▲ **TUMBLE:** Another effect which is deal for creating dramatic effects. Using Tumble Backwards (your animation package will reverse the order) with logos makes a great effect as the letters all spin onto the screen and magically line up. Tumble is useful forwards too and causes your objects to literally fall apart.

Scala MM300

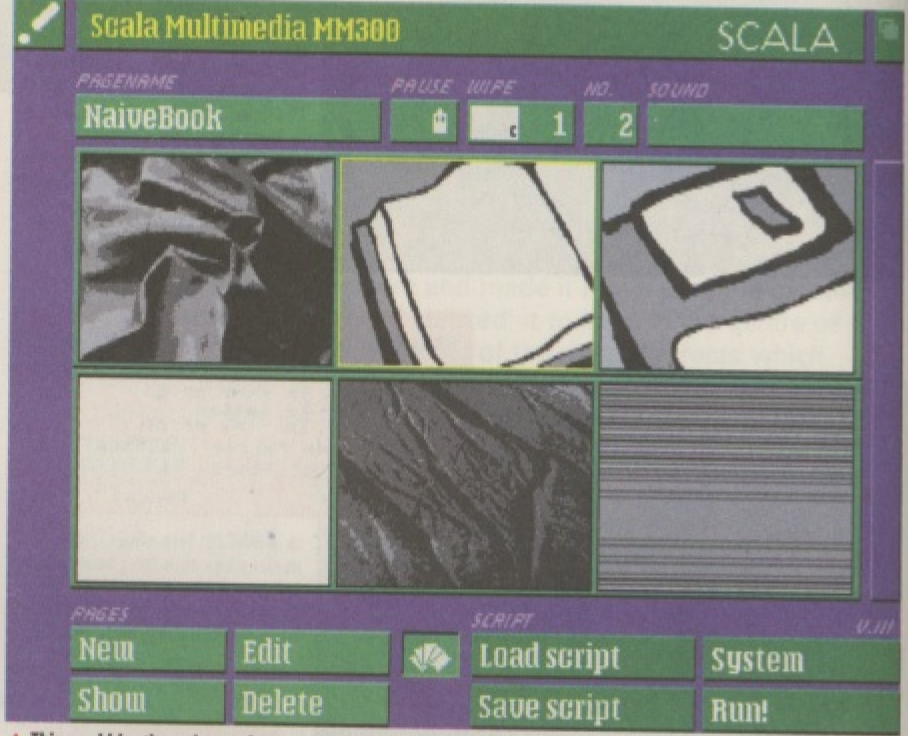
PART 3

Jazz up your Scala presentations with style. Some music and a bit of animation are all you need.

So far we've covered the use of static backdrops and brushes. However, Scala can also use animations and some audio to bring your presentations to life.

Loading an animation is very similar to selecting a picture background except there are a few additional options, which pop up in a box whenever you go to load one. The first deals with the speed of the animation, specified in frames per second (fps). If you intend recording the output onto PAL video then the frame rate should normally be set at 25fps, but it can be set to anything from 1 to 50 without causing any timing problems.

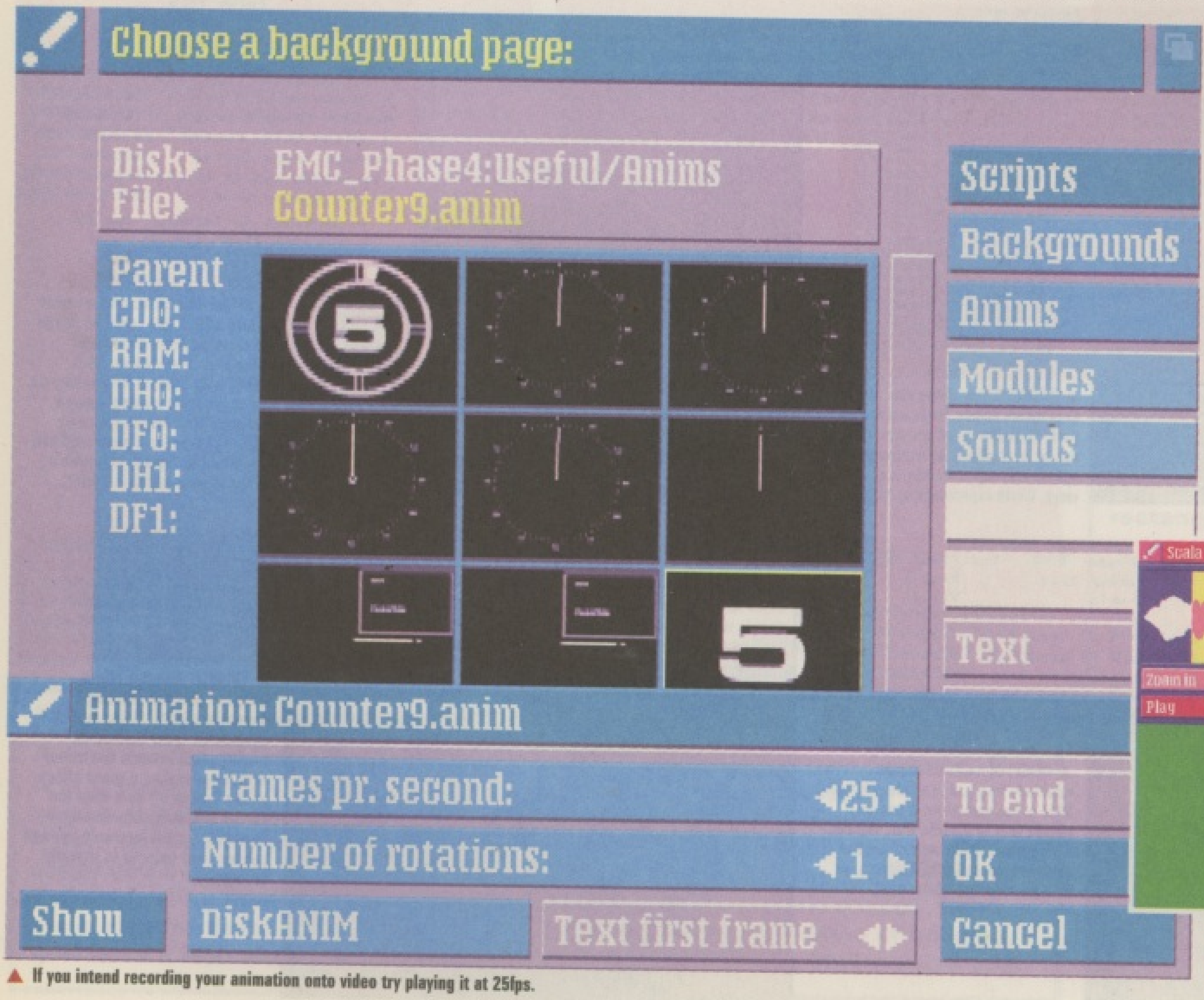
You can set the length of time the animation appears with one of two controls. First there's the number of rotations. This is the total amount of times the animation will loop around. Alternatively you can specify the duration as with any other page by using the Pause button. In this case the number of rotations should be set to infinity. Using the Pause button makes it easy to hold the last animation frame. For example, if you have an eight second animation and the Pause time is set to ten seconds, then the last frame of the animation will hold for two seconds.



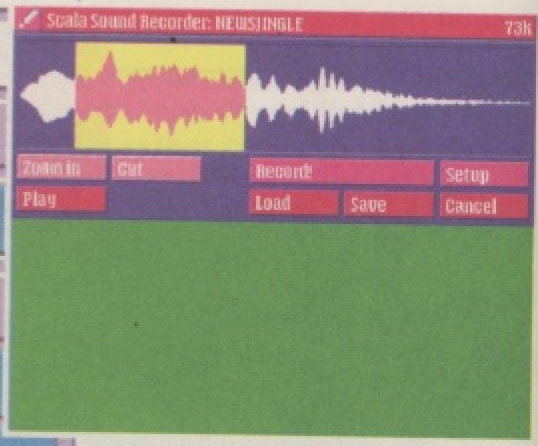
▲ This could be the colour scheme to use when you are doing the graphics for Wimbledon. Notice how I've changed the Page buttons around.

There is another way of holding the last frame of an animation, which is accessed via the Text first/last frame button. This lets you enter text on either the first or last frame of the animation. By setting a pause time for the text you will also pause the animation accordingly. By entering just a space in the text string you can hold the animation without actually displaying any text. In this case you will also need to set a Wipe Out for the text.

By the way, if you decide to enter text on the first frame of the animation you may find it gets corrupted as the animation plays. If you choose an area of the screen which remains completely static throughout the animation there won't be any trouble, otherwise the text will be



▲ If you intend recording your animation onto video try playing it at 25fps.



▲ Highlight an area with the mouse if you only want to play part of a sample.

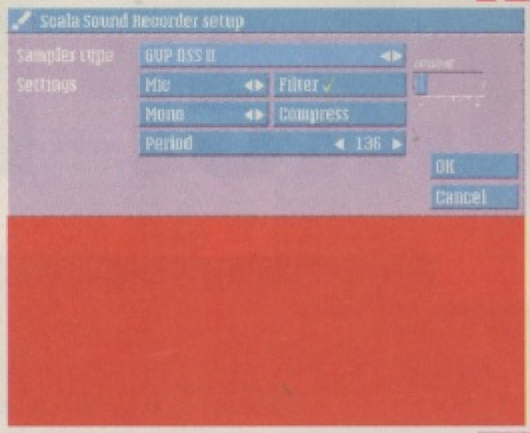
overwritten by the following frames. You can work around this if you have a good understanding of how bitplanes work.

Audio dynamite

Scala has some powerful tools to handle audio, including soundtracks (MOD files) and one-shot sound effects (IFF samples). You can select either by clicking on one of the buttons in the Sound column alongside the relevant page. This ensures that the audio is played at the same time as the page is displayed.

If you want to play more than one module or sample during the same page you can insert a Direct Access Line (DAL) after the previous page. This is a type of event which doesn't alter what's happening on screen. Select New Page and then click on the Sound column on the required line and then choose your sound file. Alternatively you could use the DAL which is always present as the last entry in the list. Drag this to the required position and then select your sound. A new blank DAL will be added to the end of the list.

Now when Scala displays a page, it not only plays the sound on the same line, it also plays the sounds on the DAL until it reaches a new page. Whether these sounds play simultaneously or in sequence depends on the timing set in the Pause button. Don't forget though, there are only four audio channels on the Amiga, sampled sounds may take more than a single channel and MODs will take all four. So if sounds won't play together they are probably competing for the same channels.



▲ With your own audio sampler sounds can be brought directly into Scala.

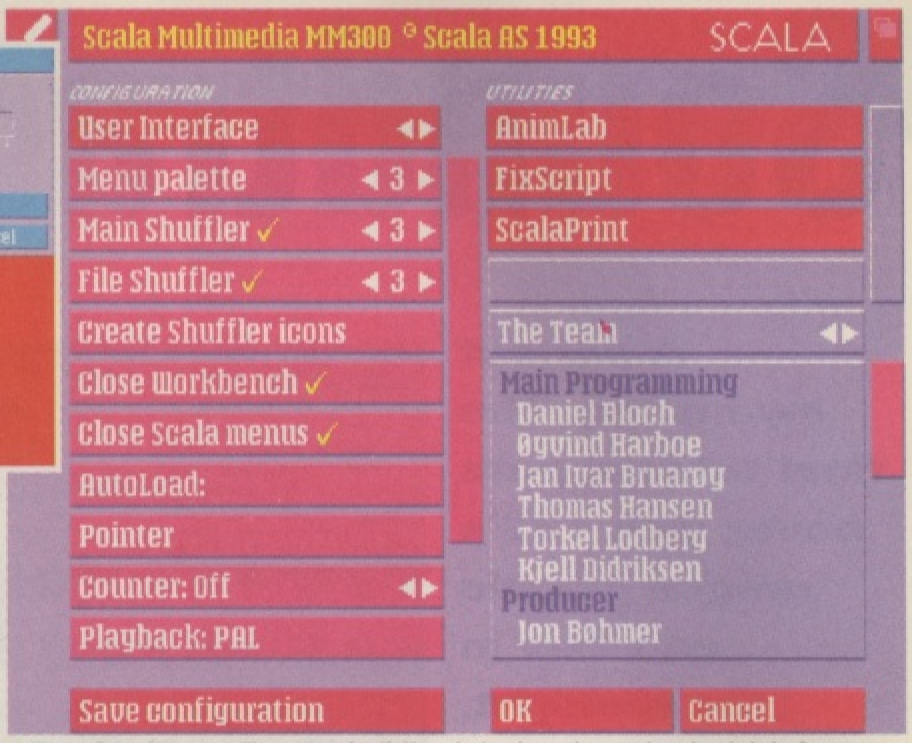
Sound options

The Sound menu is practically the same for both IFF samples and MOD files. Once you load a sound you can set a fade in or fade out time. In addition you can set a volume level and the number of times the sound loops. These options can be set differently for each sound or module in the presentation.

There's also a Wait toggle button. When this is set the script will wait until the sound has finished before continuing.

The replay pitch of IFF samples can be set using the Period button. This will change to the default pitch of the sample after loading. Higher period settings will lead to a lower pitch and vice versa.

Scala has its own mini audio processor built in where you can record, edit and save audio samples. Click on the Edit Sound button to get to the Scala Sound Recorder. While it's quite limited, it comes in handy if all you want to do is shorten a sample. Just click on the sample to set the start point then Shift-Click to set the end. Or you can just drag the mouse across a section of the sample. If you have a parallel port sound sampler then you can even grab audio directly into Scala.



▲ The configuration screen. Please note that if things don't quite work as you intend, switch the Counter to On, and Scala will then show which page number is being displayed.

Additional control over any audio that happens to be playing can be obtained by clicking on the arrows in the Play button. By setting the slider in the Volume button you can adjust the overall level and optionally set a fade time. The Wait button pauses the script until all the audio has finished.

Configuration

Scala has a very friendly user interface, but that doesn't mean that you can't change its looks. You have probably discovered the small pack of cards at the bottom of the Main menu – this is the Shuffler. Clicking on the Shuffler toggles between two different user interfaces (text-based and graphical).

What isn't so obvious is that we can alter the width of the text boxes. Position the mouse between the Pagename and Wipe columns and, holding the left mouse button down, drag the mouse to the left. The Pagename column narrows and extra columns come into view.

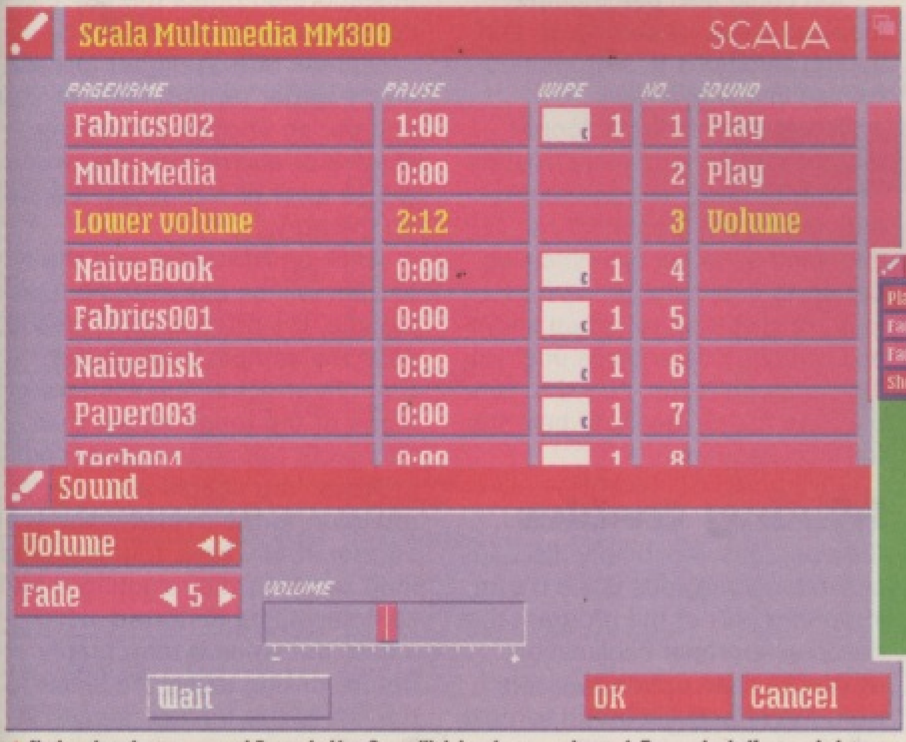
Select the System button and click on the arrows in the User Interface button until it reads Scala EX. Click on the Wipe button and drag it to a new position. This alters its position in the Main menu. You can do this to reposition any of the buttons. Now go back to the main menu to see how it looks.

How about a change of colour? Go back to the System menu and change the Scala EX button back to User Interface. Click on the arrows on the Menu palette button until you reach one you like. If you want to save any of these changes then don't forget to select the Save Configuration button at the bottom of the screen.

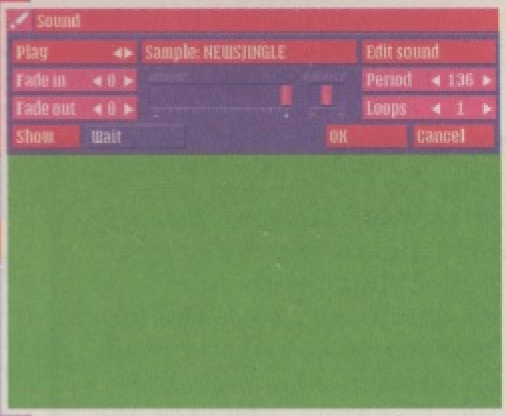
As with the Main menu, we can also use the Shuffler in the File menu. This makes it very easy to distinguish different backgrounds, especially if they have some obscure filename. Scala can take quite a while to redraw these thumbnail images, so if you have plenty of disk space you can save time by making sure the Create Shuffler Icons button is ticked. Special icons are written to disk, so next time you select that directory the thumbnails are displayed in a fraction of the time.

To change the short-cut buttons down the side of the File menu you must first select a directory. Then hold the Shift Key down while selecting one of the buttons. Now the next time you click on the button it will take you straight to that directory. ■

Norman Harris



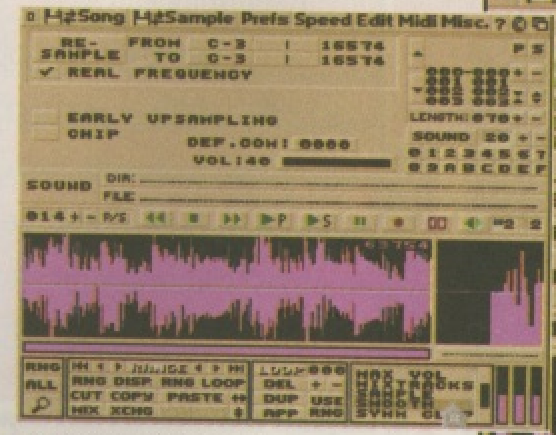
▲ Notice that the one second Pause in Line One will delay the second sound. Two and a half seconds later both sounds slowly faded to half volume.



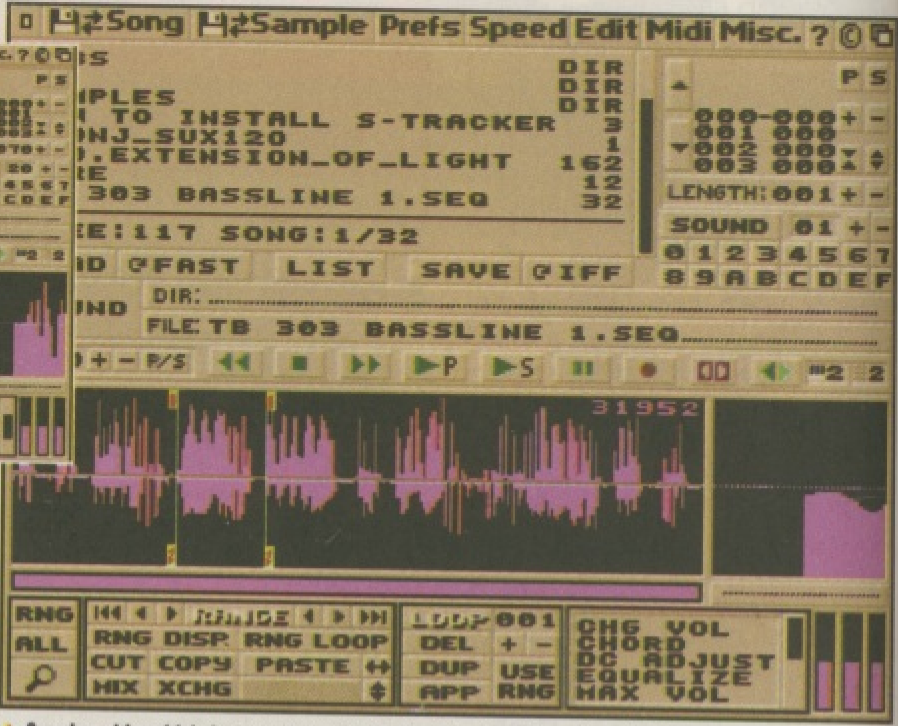
▲ By ticking the Wait button, Scala will wait until the sound stops before proceeding with the script.

Soundtracker II Pro

A perfect swansong. The final tutorial puts cover disk 132's unique graphic equaliser in the spotlight.



▲ The Smooth option is good for removing minor distortion that occurs during the Mixtracks process.



▲ Samples with multiple loops are supported in Soundtracker II Pro and can be loaded directly from Audiomaster IV .seq files. Multi-loops work especially well with background effects and atmospheres.

You've probably realised by now that Soundtracker Pro II has quite a bit more to offer than most trackers. One of its most original and creative features is its three-band graphic equaliser, which you'll find at the bottom right corner of the sample editor. Any changes you make with this are applied directly to the currently selected sample.

From left to right, the three bars represent bass, middle and high frequencies. The specific frequencies will depend on the sample rate of your sample. To alter your sample, set the sliders to the appropriate positions and then select Equalise from the effects menu. You can tell when a slider is at the central position because it changes colour to a darker shade of pink.

There are plenty of uses for the equaliser controls, both sensible and not so sensible. On the sensible side of things you can use them to clean up samples that are marred by hiss or hum noise, or boost certain frequencies to make a particular sample brighter or more beefy.

However, if you like a bit of experimentation you can have loads of fun by applying extreme equalisation to samples and loops, continually tweaking the settings while your song is playing. Fans of Dave Clarke, Plastikman and other warped techno creators can emulate their idols with ease, cranking up the various frequencies to distortion point before moving onto another frequency band. It's worth using the DC Adjust effect in conjunction with the EQ, as this will move the sample wave back to the centre line after it's been distorted.

Loop de loop

Normally you can only specify one loop within a sample, but Soundtracker lets you set up as many as you like (over 65,000 in fact). If you've got Audiomaster IV (from the November 1995 issue of CU Amiga Magazine) you may remember that it too supported multiple loop sequences. Any sequences you've made with Audiomaster can be loaded into the Soundtracker sample editor and used within your songs.

Multiple loops are especially useful in tracker songs for things like background sound effects. For example, if you have a sample of insects and rain taken from a tropical forest, you can disguise the fact that you may only have a short sample by setting up a number of different loop points. If you just looped the whole thing it would quickly become apparent that the sound was repeating (the same bird call followed by a cricket chirp for instance). With multiple loops you can make the main background hum loop, interrupted now and then by other parts of the sample at seemingly random points. The same technique can be used with any background atmosphere sample, such as traffic noise, a chattering crowd or dripping water.

You could also use multiple loops as a way of cutting up and adding variations to a drum loop for use in a jungle track.

To set up a series of loops, make your first loop as normal by clicking the App (append) button and setting the loop markers. To add another, either click the Dup button to duplicate the current loop, or click App to set up another. Continue this process until you have enough loops. Play the sample from the keyboard to hear the full loop sequence.

Mixing tracks

Although this was briefly discussed in a previous issue it's an important part of the program that deserves a proper explanation. Mixtracks is an option available from the effects list in the sample editor which combines the current pattern into a single sample. This is extremely useful when you've built up a song but have run out of tracks for additional sounds.

The first thing to do once you've got your song loaded and your pattern selected is to move to a blank sample slot using the instrument select buttons. Now you should set the sample rate to be used by the mixed track sample. This will be set to 16 kHz (note C-3) but you can change it by selecting the Sound menu and changing the figure in the box marked From. Click on this and then press the key that corresponds to the required sample rate. A higher rate will give a better reproduction of your pattern, so choose something like A-3 or above. You may want to use a lower rate if you are low on memory.

Click on Mixtracks and the pattern will be converted into a sample. It's often a good idea to pass the sample through the Smooth effect which will take off some of the rough edges that can occur during the conversion process. You should also pay attention to the overall volume control. If you have four tracks of loud samples the resulting mixed sample will be distorted, so adjust the volume temporarily before mixing using the slider to the left of the tracker display. ■

Tony Horgan

Want to know more?

That concludes our brief series on SoundTracker II Pro. If you want to know more or would like to see the program developed further, why not send an Email with your comments to the author, whose details can be found in the on-line documentation. For those who missed out on this excellent music program, it was included free with the May 1996 issue of CU Amiga Magazine. You may still be able to get a copy from our back issues department. Call them on 01858 468 888.

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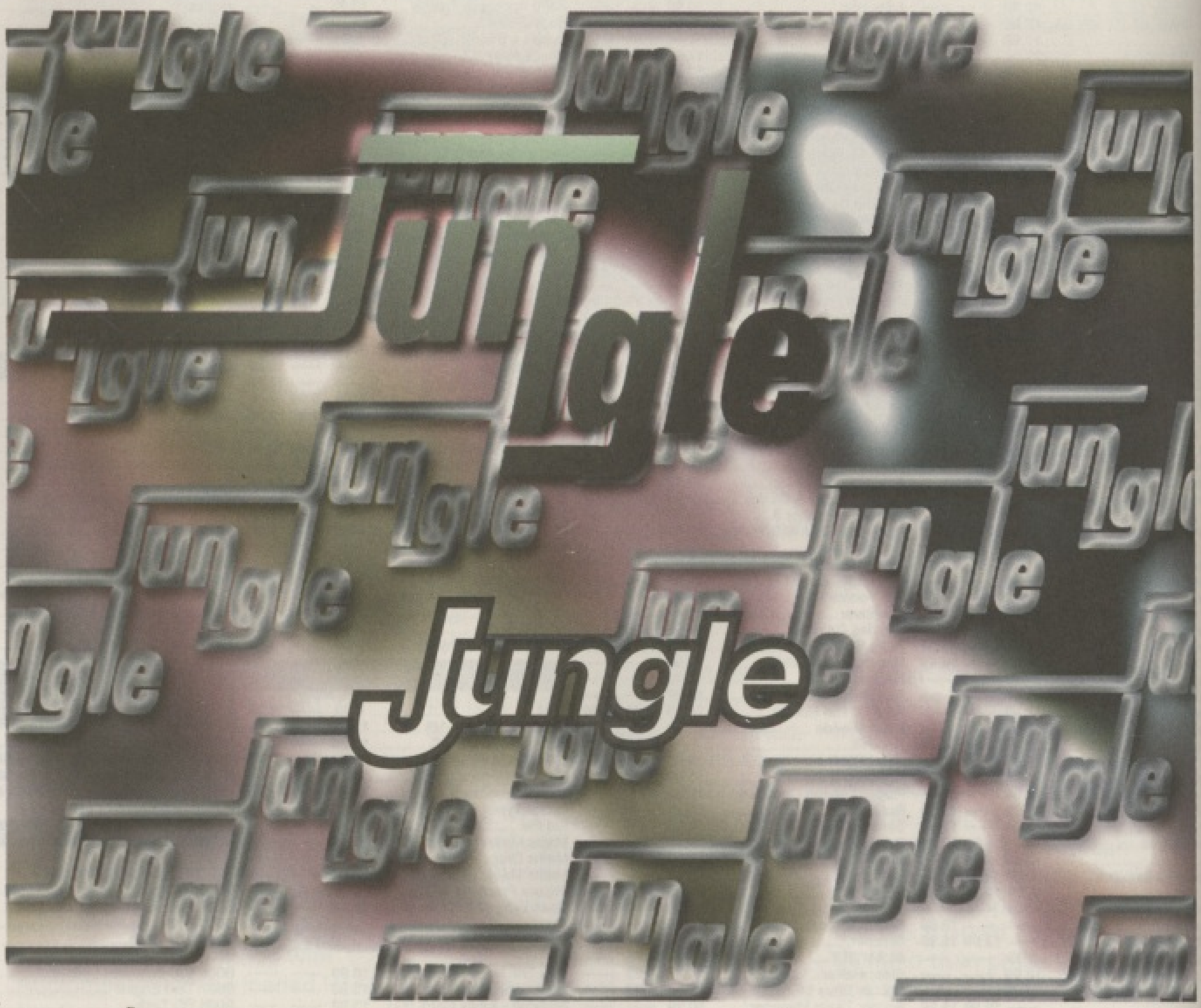
SM001 5 Simulation Games (not 1200)	1.25
SM002 Return To Earth	1.25
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Sound Lab

Jungle techniques

Sound Lab has recently received stacks of requests for information and tips on making jungle, drum and bass tracks, so here we go!



There are new sounds and styles appearing on the jungle scene every week, so even though we covered some of the main techniques a few months ago it seemed about time to return to the subject. All those who know what drum and bass is all about can skip the next paragraph (you'll only disagree with it), which is a brief introduction for anyone who's not sure what we're talking about here.

Jungle music, otherwise known as drum and bass, evolved from the hardcore rave scene of the early 90s, stripping away many of the elements to concentrate on fast, complex but essentially funky drum patterns (normally derived from samples of live drumming), underpinned by super-low frequency basslines and embellished by various styles of instrumentation. There are now many different styles of drum and bass, such as 'intelligent' (which is a snobby name for mellow chin-stroking jungle), jazzy (the critics' favourite), dark (moody and scary), rollin' (beats that kind of run on and on with longer looping evolving patterns than usual) and plenty more. It's now accepted that jungle doesn't necessarily have to be club-orientated dance music, hence ambient jungle for listening to at home with your pipe and slippers.

Now we all know what we're talking about we can get down to business. There are some jungle techniques that have been covered in previous issues which I'd rather not waste space repeating, but I'll summarise them before moving on. First of all there's the sub-bass. This is basically a sine wave played at very low frequencies. Try using an OctaMED synth sound or a looped TR-808 bass drum. Then there's timestretching (changing the length of a sample without altering its pitch), which can be achieved with Audiomaster IV or the Sample Offset command slides (no.19 in OctaMED).

Sources for good junglist drum loops include old funk and hip hop records, sample CDs and of course other jungle records. Now on with the new stuff.

Silky smooth

One of the most popular recent progressions of jungle is the 'smooth' sound. This is open to plenty of personal interpretation, but it basically describes tracks that sound slick and well produced, generally not too aggressive. One way to achieve this effect is to process your samples so that they each occupy a specific area of the audio spectrum. You'll achieve that clean cut sound if the drum loops, basslines, melodies and effects do not overlap in the frequency range. The best way to do this is to EQ your samples

Example module

You'll find most of these techniques demonstrated in an OctaMED module that I've written specifically to accompany this article. The module is called JungleExamples.mod and can be found on the Aminet in the 'mods/jungl' area. This will also be included on the CD edition of the August 1996 issue of CU Amiga Magazine.

using something like Audiomaster or Soundtracker II Pro.

For example, you might want to separate your basslines from your rhythm tracks, although your drum loops may contain bass drum hits and other background and ambient frequencies. If you filter out everything below the mid-range from the drum loop you'll avoid those lower frequencies clashing with and obscuring your basslines. If you want to replace the bass drum hits from the original breakbeat, you can then do so with a separate bass drum sample on a new track. If you start running out of track, use a Mixtracks or Mod to Sample option from your tracker to convert the pattern to a single sample.

The same equalisation (EQ) theories apply to the other samples in your track. It helps to have clean samples to work with from the start, so choose your sounds carefully. 'Detroit' techno records are often a good source for original sounds and instrument samples; check the works of Carl Craig (aka Paperclip People) and the likes for some crystal clear samples and a lesson in 'smooth' production. Even though this is kind of techno-house, there are many parallels in the production techniques.

Creative FX

The Amiga and a tracker is a great combination for producing complex drum and bass patterns. Having a sample editor built into your tracker gives you enormous scope for experimentation because you can mess around with your samples and test them out straight away. Take advantage of this by getting to know all of the available effects in your sample editor and any other editors you may have.

Processing an entire breakbeat is easy enough but why not try highlighting each 'hit' in the loop and passing them all through different effects. Alternatively load a few copies of the same loop, process them in their entirety each with different effects, then chop and change between the different versions in time with the beat. Alternatively you could gradually fade from one processed loop to the next, working through as many different effects as you like. This would give the impression of a breakbeat loop mutating through a variety of effects. Mess around with echoes, phasers, flangers, filters and distortion effects and don't be afraid to alter the default settings to extreme values.

Slow fast

You must have heard tracks that start with a slow hip hop breakbeat and then accelerate seemlessly into turbo-nutter speed frantic jungle drumming. The tempo suddenly changes but the slow loop still fits in with the new, much faster, tempo. This is achieved by doubling and halving the tempo, using the same loop at half and then double speed. If your fast loop was tuned to note G-3, you could play the same loop on another track tuned to note G-2 and they would fit together perfectly. That's because the notes on octave number three are played at twice the speed of their corresponding notes on octave number two.

For super-fast rolls you can either temporarily change the tempo of your track using a tempo change command, or just make sure you always start composing with a double-speed tempo from the outset. This will give you enough lines on your block to throw in a quick succession of snares, bass drums or whatever.

Basslines

Unless you're writing 'four beat' style happy hardcore tunes (in which case you will probably want to put a bass drum on every fourth beat) you may find it worth integrating your basslines and your bass drums.

Starting with a straight TR-808 or TR-909 kick drum sample, you can set up a loop in the sample so that it sustains at a stable frequency. You can then tune the bass drum sample to the rest of the instrumentation in the track. Now you can use a single 'hit' of the bass drum as part of the beat, but you can also use sustained looped bass drum notes to make a tuned bassline. Depending on the features of your chosen tracker it may be easier to have two versions of the bass drum, one for the hits and a looped version for the longer notes (although using the Hold and Decay parameters in OctaMED you can use just one sample for both).

Once you've got your bassline cooking you could try adding some of those spine-tingling subsonic pitch slides on the sustained bass notes. Make use of the automatic pitch slide creator if your tracker has one.

Any parts of your tracks which contain just bass (and possibly some midrange) can be cleaned up by switching on the Amiga's low pass filter. This is an analogue filter which takes out much of the treble from all four channels during playback (it doesn't permanently alter your samples). This is very good for removing the stepping noise which is often apparent on simple bass waves. OctaMED and most trackers will allow you to turn this on and off with a command in your tracker sequence. In the case of OctaMED, FF9 turns it on and FF8 turns it back off again.

Snares and breaks

Snare drums are very useful for stepping up the energy level of your rhythms. Try copying the snare drum part from one of your breakbeats to form an additional drum sample, and then layer extra snare patterns over the original breakbeat using a spare track. You can then bang away on your extra snare drum track to hype up the rhythm. There's no reason why you can't mix and match different rhythm samples to create a really exotic backing. Throw in a bit of tribal percussion or a bit of Brazilian samba to add a bit of spice. Anyone can sample the classic 'Amen' breakbeat, but do you want your tracks to sound like a thousand others?

General tips

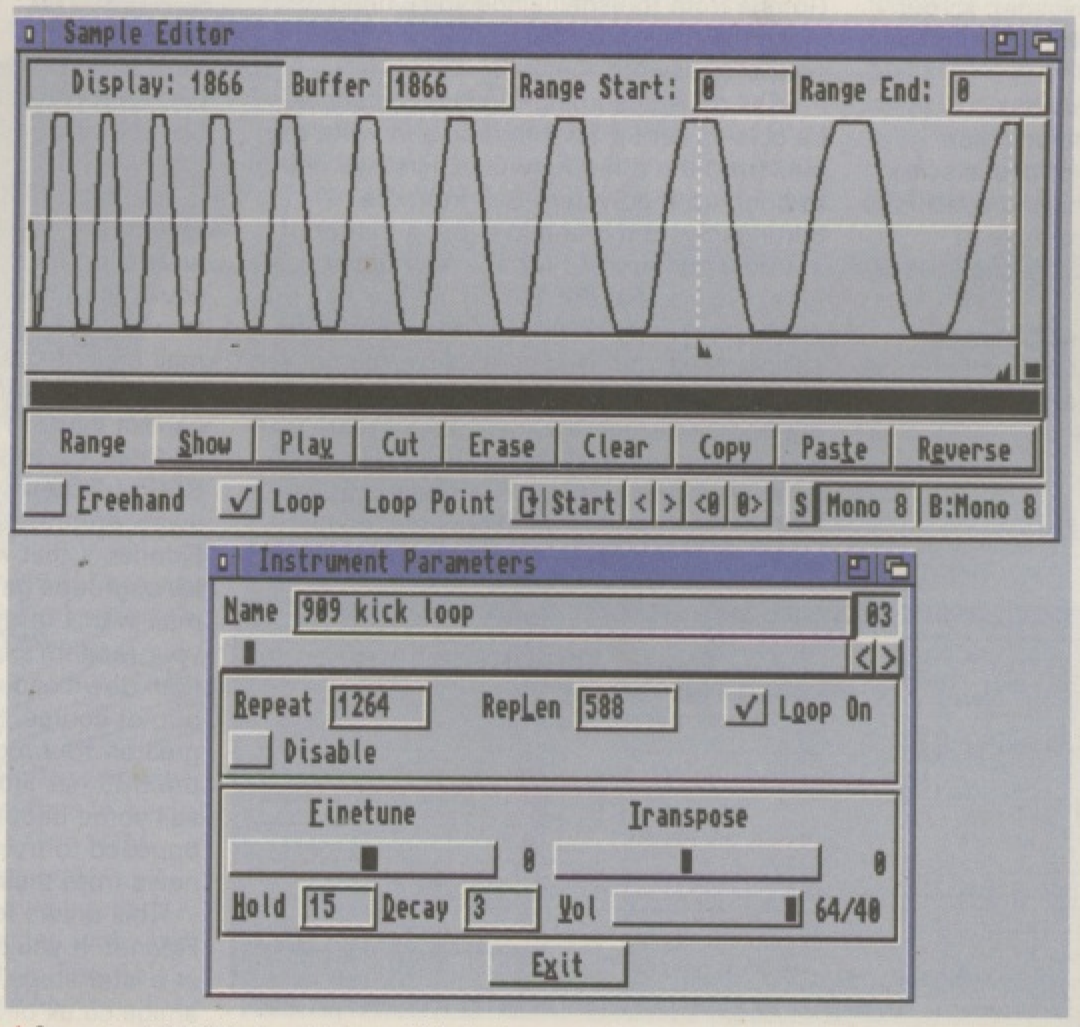
One thing worth remembering is that the only defining elements of drum and bass are the drums and the bass. That may sound obvious but what that means is that you can combine the rhythms with absolutely any style of music, not just the flavours that are currently in vogue. It's also worth bearing in mind that you don't have to be aiming for the euphoric 3am Saturday night dancefloor crowd. Go with whatever feels right.

Time signatures are normally set to 4/4 on trackers and sequencers (mean that there are four beats in every bar) however this can be changed. If you find 4/4 timing too predictable then try other patterns. Get hold of a music theory book if you want to learn more about time signatures.

That about wraps it up for now, so until the next time, happy drumming!

Remember, even Goldie had to start somewhere so keep practising. ■

Tony Horgan



▲ One way to get that distinctive sub-bass sound is by looping a sample of a TR-909 bass drum as in this example. With these settings it will sound like a normal bass drum but can also be sustained by inserting Hold commands in the sequence.

Wired World

PART 12

In a two pronged attack on exploring the world of Comms, we finish our look at Fidonet and begin the process creating our own WWW pages.



If you followed last month's tutorial on Fidonet you should just about have got up and running with a single network. However, there's more to Fidonet technology than that as it can also handle more than one network at the same time. Each of these networks may have different topics, rules and methods of operation so to get into each one, you'll need a BBS which supports that network and a point address. To enable us to do this we'll need to make some alterations to our previous set-up. Let's begin ...

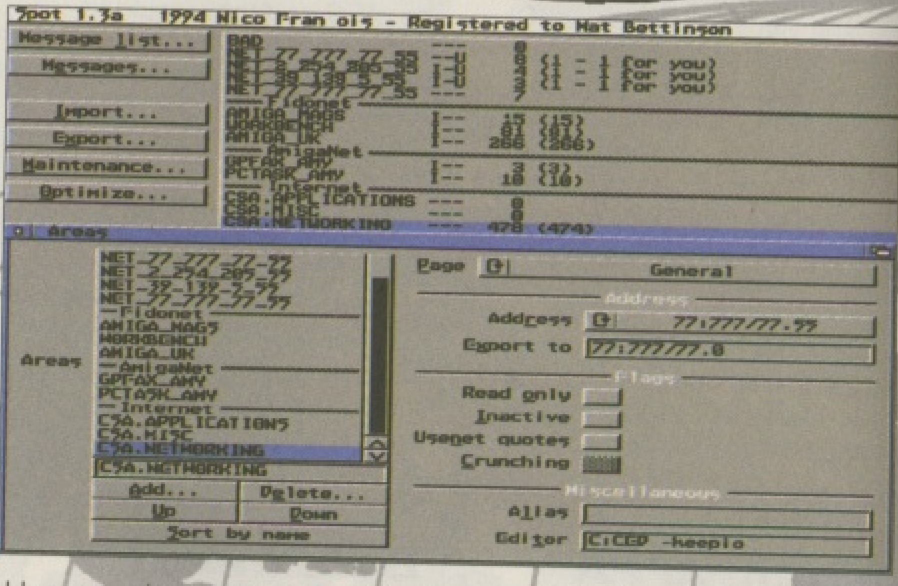
Firstly, unlike last month's tutorial we can't get away with launching Gotcha, our 'mailer', with a simple line typed into the shell. We need to create a configuration file for Gotcha. In last month's example we were point 84 'pointing' off the Darkside BBS so our Fidonet address was 2:254/524.84. The same formula applies to other networks. Darkside is 39:139/1.0 in the excellent Amiganet, so our address would be 39:139/1.84. This is known as an 'AKA'.

Last month's Gotcha archive has some good documentation including an example configuration. Most of this is suitable except for the top bit which is specific to your own set-up. Here's an example of the changes you'll need to add to the start of the configuration file;

```
ADDRESS = "2:254/524.84@Fidonet"
AKAS = "39:139/1.84@Amiganet"
BOSSNUMBER = "2:254/524"
SYSOP = "CU Amiga Reader"
BBS = "Home"
LOCATION = "Somewhere"
PHONENUMBER = "-Unpublished-"
PASSWORD = "xxxxx"
```

Ensure that the 'xxxxx' is filled in with your session password which you should have arranged with the Sysop earlier. Likewise all the addresses need to be changed to your specifics depending on which BBS you call. Note that it's possible to actually pick up different networks from different BBSes. In this case even your point number will change from each network. You'll also need to specify the password and boss number statement on the command line when starting Gotcha from the shell since you'll need to make the mailer dial each BBS with the correct password.

If all goes according to plan, you should be able to set up Spot to read and write the mail from the other networks. First we need to bring up the System GUI from the Settings/System menu. It's just a matter of entering our address for any new networks here. Ensure that the 'Export To' box has the the correct node address of the BBS we're calling. Next you need to enter, in the packer boxes, the archiver command lines for packing and unpacking the mail. 'LHA a' and 'LHA x' is suffice for obtaining mail via LHA while 'LZX -X0 a' and 'LZX -X0 x' is needed to use LZX. Make sure that you know what type of archived mail you're going to get. It should

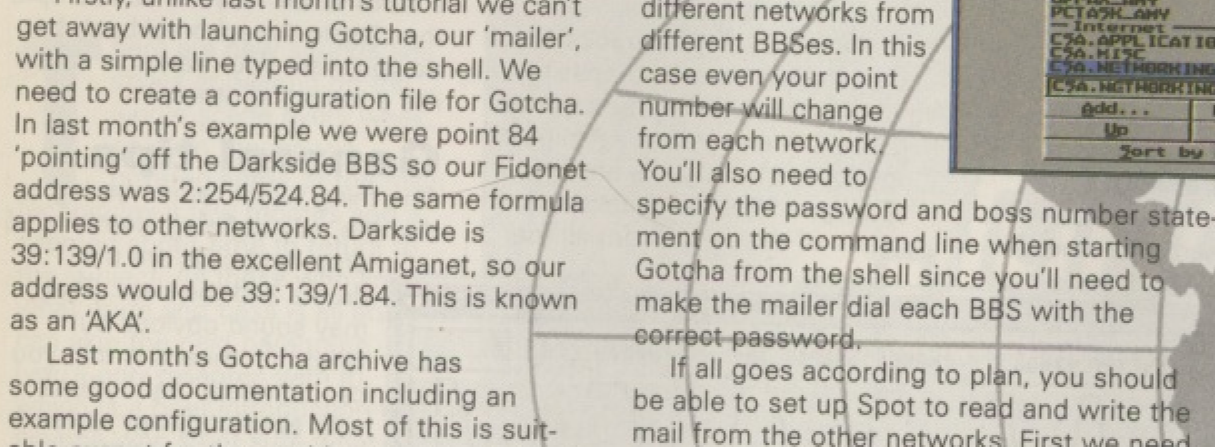


▲ In this example, we've plugged in Fidonet, AmigaNet and a gated Usenet network as well. Notice that we can add some Arexx scripts and such forth to the unpacker box. In this case it's one that can handle all types of archived mail.

have been sorted out with the Sysop beforehand but you can organise the mailtype you'll be receiving with a message to the BBSes areafix robot.

It's important to note that when sending mail to the BBSes AreaFix robot, you must write that mail in the specific netmail areas. If you want a new AmigaNet echo, you'll need to write to AreaFix from your AmigaNet netmail area. It's also important to ensure that you are writing in the echomail areas with the correct address and exporting to the correct address. If you export AmigaNet mail to the BBS as Fidonet, it will most likely be thrown away. Another thing that's handy about Fidonet is that many BBSes will carry Usenet Newsgroups gated into FTN echos. Getting mail in this format is compressed and sent at your modem's full rate so it's more efficient than downloading it from an Internet account but, of course, lag times will be much greater. Your mail won't go onto Usenet until the BBS has linked up and delivered it. Even still some people prefer this method as opposed to trying to 'slurp' a lot of NNTP news from their Internet account.

This draws to a close our diversion into Fidonet. If you'd like to see more on Fidonet at a later stage, E-mail me at mat@cu-amiga.co.uk or Fidonet Netmail at 2:254/205.0.



▲ Here we're plugging in our addresses for the other networks. Note the packer and unpacker boxes. These are the correct settings if your boss system supports the more efficient LZX archiver.

Creating your own Home Page

Make the most of last month's cover mounted Comms book special internet access offers. Set up your own home pages. Here's how.

If you took up one of last month's net access special offers from InternetFCI (in CU Amiga Magazine's cover mounted Comms Bible) you might be wondering what the free Web space is for. In a previous Wired World tutorial, we looked at running the Amiga Web Server on your Amiga. This was great but it only works while you are linked up, which is not ideal for a permanent Web site. What you need is someone's machine to hold the pages and serve them to anyone who wants to browse through them 24 hours a day. And that's where your free Web space comes in!

HTML heaven

The basic idea is that you FTP upload your home page including any pictures, to a special site and directory. First you need to get your pages working though. To do this, you can use the provided Voyager browser to display your home page. You'll just need to put the files in a directory and tell Voyager to load from file. You'll find this option in the Windows menu as 'Open Local File'. Before we can even do that, however, we'll need to create some HTML to view the pages. If you specify a site in a WWW browser with no actual file to load, they will automatically look for 'index.html'. This means your home page should be called 'index.html'. To start create a directory on your hard drive called 'www' or something, fire up your favourite text editor and enter a variation of the following;

```
<HTML>
<HEADER>
<TITLE>CU Amiga Reader's Home
Page</TITLE>
</HEADER>
<BODY>
<H2><IMG align=right
SRC="pics/ourpic.gif">
<H2>I'm just getting started on my
home page so there's nothing to
see right now. Please come back
later and I should have more
wonders to entertain you. </H2>
<ADDRESS>
<H4>Created by <A HREF="mailto:cu-
reader@thenet.co.uk?Subject=WWW">a
CU Reader</A></H4>
</ADDRESS>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

This is a basic HTML example. We won't go into it in depth right now but suffice to say that the words enclosed in '<>' are HTML 'tags' and browsers. These tags and browsers are there to carry out instructions. Ensure that you replace 'cu-reader' with your real username on the 'created by' line. This text should be saved out as the filename 'index.html' in your 'www' directory made previously. You should be able to get Voyager to load this page to see the results. HTML isn't very fussy about where you break the lines. The tags can be on the same line or not, it won't care either way but make sure not to put a return in the middle of a HTML tag. The 6th line has a special IMG tag. We've put pics/ourpic.gif here for this example. Get a favourite picture of yours, convert it to GIF via a paint package or somesuch and save it out as 'ourpic.gif'. Now make a directory within this WWW directory called 'pics'. Place the picture in there. Be sure to use all lower case because Internet FCI's web server, like most of the net, is case sensitive.

Now to get our page onto InternetFCI, let's assume that when you called InternetFCI to arrange your account, you nominated the name of 'cu-reader' and a password of 'subscribe'. You'll need both of these now as it's time to configure your FTP client to log on to your web space. Go to the provided AmFTP client, and press the connect button and you'll be brought to your 'phone book'. Click new, type in 'My Site' as a profile name, then 'wwwftp.fcl.net' as a Host Name. Now enter your user name as the log-in name. In our example, we've put 'cu-reader'. Next put your own password in the Password box. Again in our example, we've used 'subscribe' as a password. That's all you need to do, you should now be connected.

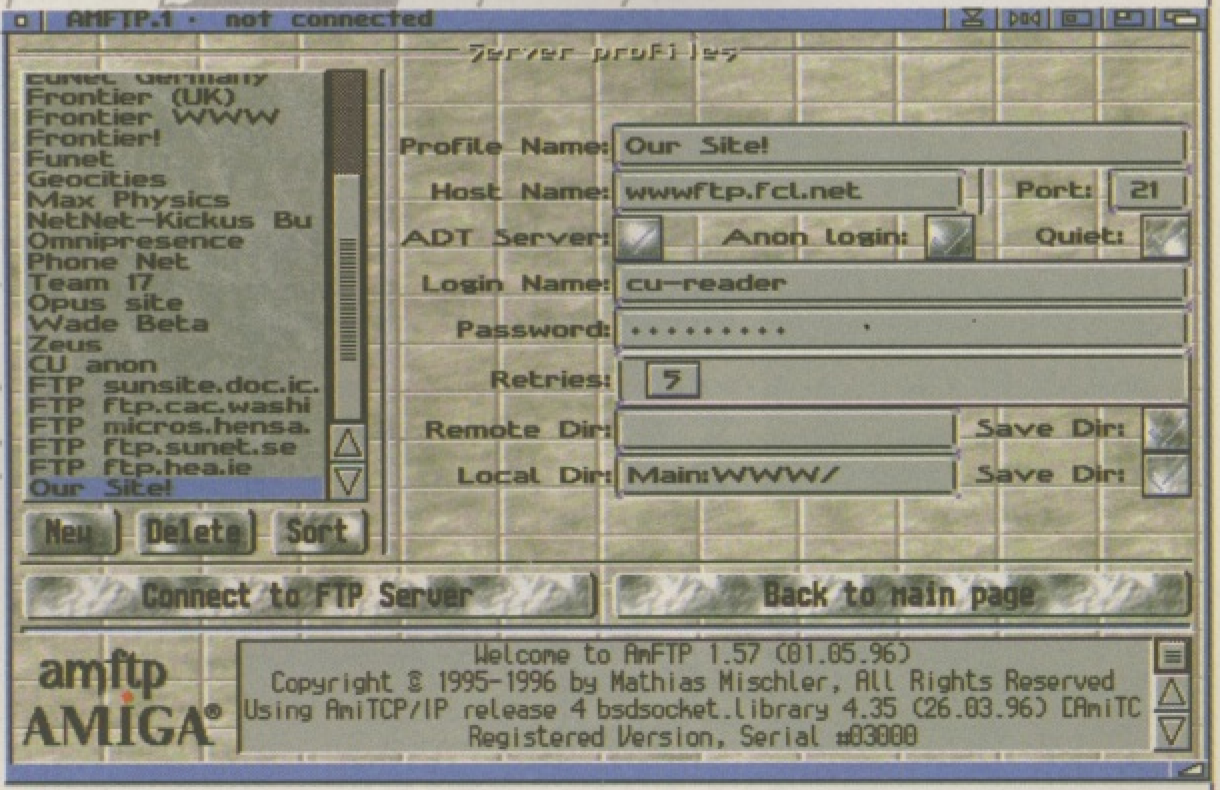
Logged on

If you got your username and password correct, you'll be logged into your own space and you should see a directory in the right-hand window called WWW. Double click on the window to get into that directory. InternetFCI may have already placed some example home page material within your drawer which you may see now. You might like to create a temporary directory in the left lister of AmFTP. To do this highlight all the files and press Receive. You can look at these after (and view in Voyager) to see how they work. To make our own page, all the files will need to be highlighted and deleted with the delete button (if it won't let you do this, call Internet FCI). Click on the MkDir button on the right-hand lister to create a directory. Enter the word 'pics' here. You should then see a directory appear. Well done, you've created your very own pictures directory on the InternetFCI web server.

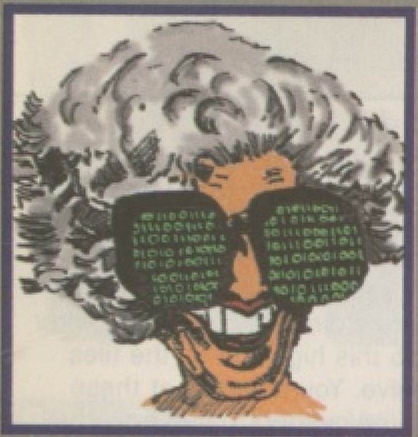
Now move the left-hand lister to your WWW directory made earlier. Double click on the pics drawer in both listers so both directories are shown. Click on your picture and select send. It should go to the server with no problems. Now select Parent on both windows, click on your 'index.html' file and click on Send. There, your home page is done! To check this out, enter the following into Voyagers URL box. **http://www.thenet.co.uk/~cu-reader**. Replace 'cu-reader' with your own user name. Hopefully your page should appear exactly as you saw it when viewing locally. You can now tell your friends and family your very own Web site address. Time to have it added on to your business card!

Next month, we'll be taking an in-depth look at the HTML language so that you can create the mother of all Web sites. They'll also be buckets of HTML to look at on the CD issue of the magazines so place your order now. Finally, don't forget to check out our pages at http://www.cu-amiga.co.uk. ■

Mat Bettinson



▲ Adding our WWW pages site into AmFTP is easy. Just don't forget to enter the Login Name and Password the same as your TheNet account.



Net God speaks

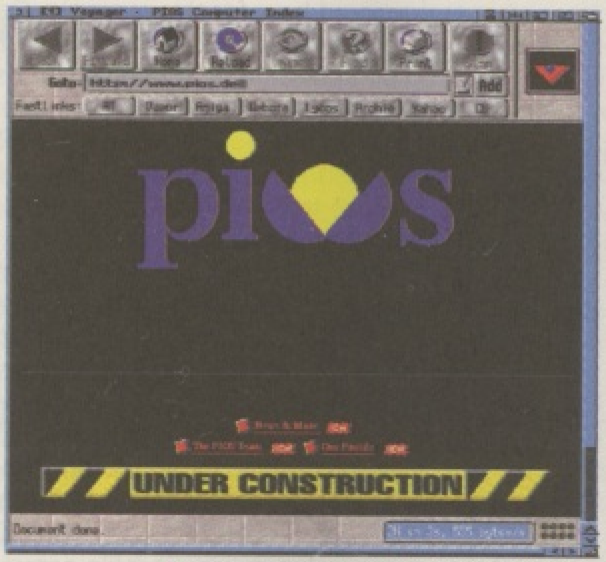
No sooner had the new PD web browser Voyager been released than folks started to flame it on Usenet. Mr Wagner spends his free time coding a darn nice little web browser IMHO and gives it away FREE to the Amiga community and this is the thanks he gets? Sheesh. Come on people, get a grip! Anyone programming such things for the Amiga (let alone doing it for free) is a valuable treasure. I'm sure the gent will welcome constructive criticism but the amount of Amiga users willing to take for granted someone else's hard work and then bite the hand that feeds them has led me to use some peeved smileys >8-/. You can be sure that 90% of the time these are the kind of people who never coded anything for the Amiga community themselves. Personally I'm just glad we now have a choice of browsers with a bright future. I'm happy as a student with free on-line access. Almost.

Surf's up!

VIScorp take on Compton, Oliver Wagner is ill and a new worldwide RPG is planned for the Net. CU Amiga's undercover Netcop turns up trumps again.

Oliver Wagner ill

The Amiga's number one comms software developer, Oliver Wagner, fell ill this month. Mr Wagner is the creator of the brilliant AmIRC IRC client and the excellent freeware Voyager WWW browser. The 'mystery illness' that has laid Olli low has been serious enough to keep him away from the Net. One nasty side effect of his illness is that RETU, the new mail package to be included in the CU Amiga/Internet FCI installer package, hasn't been finished in time. This caused some confusion as the cover mounted Comms Bible documented RETU where MiniMail was provided. However, MiniMail is still a good package and can be replaced by RETU when it's available at a later date. CU Amiga Magazine wishes Oliver a speedy recovery and thanks him for the excellent Net software he's brought to the Amiga.



▲ Spefan Domeyer's PIOS plans to bring an Amiga compatible OS to power PCs.

Net Connect CD

Active Software are set to release a new Internet-in-a-box package on CD. The bundle comes with registered versions of key Internet software. The clients provided include: Voyager, AmIRC, mFTP 2, MNews and PowerMail. Most interesting though is the GUI preferences set-up which allows quick and easy set-up for major providers since much of their settings come built in. A most welcome feature for someone wishing to choose their own Internet provider.

The Net Connect CD is said to be based on AmiTCP 4.3 'dial-up' TCP/IP stack which is extremely good news given the low £34.99 retail price. The Net Connect CD looks to be shaping up to be a brilliant set-up of use to both Internet novices and veterans alike. Call Active Software on 01325 352260 for further information or E-mail enquiries@active2.demon.co.uk.

New on-line Amiga RPG

An organisation known as A.N.G.L.E (Amiga Net Games for Light Entertainment) are planning the release of a worldwide game on the Net. The game called Portals is described as 'a freely distributable, Internet-based, fantasy role playing game which recreates the feel of a real RPG (i.e. one played out in real life) because [wait for it] you are playing with real people, who could be anywhere in the world'. They go on to describe the game as a cross between Chaos Engine and Zelda with tributes to various MUD (multi user dungeon) systems around with many new touches of its own.

Portals is still in development and is being solely programmed by the A.N.G.L.E team who are a group of non-profit Amiga programmers spanning the world putting this project together via the Internet.

For more information check out their home pages on http://www.iper.net/angle.

VIScorp hires Compton

Jason Compton, editor of on-line magazine Amiga Report and regular CU Amiga Magazine contributor has been taken on by VIScorp. This isn't the first time Jason has been offered a job in the Amiga biz as he has already worked for Wonder Computers of Canada as their PR representative. VIScorp have hired Jason in a similar role with his position as Editor of the most famous Amiga electronic magazine being advantageous to his new employers.

Jason had this to say, "I'm joining VIScorp's Communications department as a contractor whose job it is to make sure that the Amiga community is aware of VIScorp's actions and intentions – and vice versa".

PIOS project on WWW

Stefan Domeyer, the former joint president of Amiga Technologies (he left shortly after the VIScorp letter of intent to sell) has set up an interesting new project called PIOS. The best way to explain it is to quote him from the PIOS WWW site; "I know exactly the reasons why we failed with Amiga. The only chance to keep it alive is a new start, without some burdens due to the history. I think, the key to success is simply to exceed our customers' expectations on performance, quality and price. We must do it as fast, but as good as possible. So, we will form some strategic alliances with companies who have shown their capabilities in design".

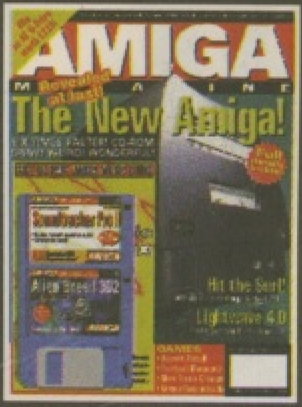
PIOS plans to bring an Amiga compatible operating system to the general Power PC platform machines.

Other key members of the PIOS team include Dave Haynie and Andy Finkel.

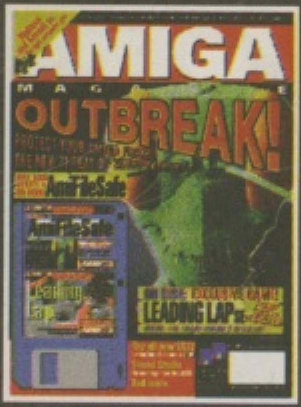
To find out more, check out their new web site on http://www.pios.de. ■



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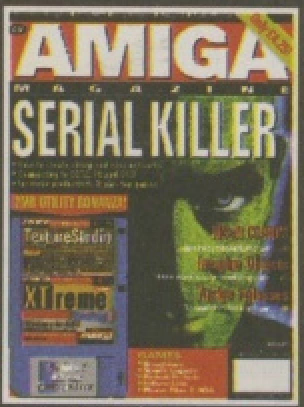


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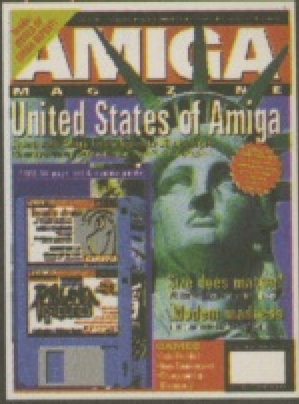
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Masterclass

This month we continue our look at ARexx and how it can be used in combination with AmigaDOS and Workbench to create some interesting little programs. These programs will be of most use if you have a hard drive and a real time clock and will add a little extra fun to your Workbench.

Listing for program number one

```
/*
    ONCE.rexx
    Once a Day

Perform actions only if this is the first time the computer has been
switched on..
*/

if open('testfile','envarc:DATE','r') then
    do
       lastdate=readln('testfile')
       close('testfile')
    end

/* If no date is found, lastdate will read empty,
    which will _not_ cause any problems! */

currentdate=date()

/*
Arexx returns dates in the form:01 May 1996
AmigaDOS returns dates in the form: Wednesday 01-May-96 13:41:39
Sigh..
*/

/* Split up the day/date/time to get the date only */

parse var lastdate day " " date " " time

/* Split up the date into day/month/year */

parse var date day "-" month "-" year

/* Create a new date in ARexx format */

lastdate = day || " " || month || " " || "19" || year

/* Compare the two dates */

say "Last date:" lastdate
say "Today's date:" currentdate

if currentdate=lastdate then
    do
       say "I don't have do to anything."
    end
else
    do
       say "OK, I'm doing stuff.."
       /* Add your stuff here !*/
    end

/* The end */
```

The applications we are going to develop in this tutorial are as follows:
1. A program which will determine if this is the first time the Amiga has been switched on that particular day. If it is the first time, various actions can be performed.
2. A program which displays a little window with a 'tip of the day' every time the Amiga is re-started.

Let's get started with the 'once a day' routine. This isn't very hard to understand, although there is a great deal of fiddling with date and time strings required. First of all though, here is how the program works.
In order for it to work, you must add the line:
`date > envarc:date`
to your user-startup sequence. This causes AmigaDOS to return the current day, date and time but instead of printing it on-screen the date is stored in ENVARC:. After this you must add the line:
`rx s:once.rexx`
(and you must get the path to the script right: I'm assuming you have it in the S: directory here). This runs our ARexx program. The first thing the program does is check in the ENV: directory. If there is no date stored here or if the date doesn't match the current date, then the computer has been switched on for the first time and so you can add instructions to perform your 'once a day' tasks. For example, I have set up my system to run my FidoNet software, because that is always the first thing I do when I switch my Amiga on in the morning.

If the date is today's date, then the computer has been reset at least once that day and no further action is necessary.

If you are confused by the use of ENV: and ENVARC:, remember that very early in the boot up procedures, the contents of ENVARC are copied from the hard drive to RAM, and stored in ENV. If the line '**`date > envarc:date`**' has been run before, there will be a date stored in ENVARC and so after booting it will now be in ENV. If the computer has not been run before, there will be no date in ENVARC to be copied – the '**`date > envarc:date`**' line adds the date AFTER the copying process.

If, when the program runs, there is a date present in ENV and it is today's date, then we can assume the computer has already been reset at least once. If it hadn't been reset and subsequently re-booted, the date wouldn't have been copied from ENVARC to ENV.

If this is still a little confusing, try the program in the box on the left instead.

Tip of the day

Some computer systems (I'm not going to say which) are notorious for popping up little

messages offering a random pearl of wisdom every time they are switched on. It's a little tacky I know, but it can also be quite endearing. Somehow I thought the Amiga could do with a similar feature and so here it is: the amazing Amiga ARexx script, 'Tip of the Day' (see box out to the right).

As I wanted the ARexx script to display a window rather than simply print out some lines of text in a Shell, I'm making use of the RexxArpLibrary functions which we examined last month. As a quick recap, this library – available from Aminet or your favourite PD library – provides a list of functions which allow ARexx to take advantage of the Amiga's Intuition system. This means ARexx can open screens and windows and pop up file requesters and gadgets. All you have to do is add a line to load the new library and use the new functions.

The listing in the box to the right therefore assumes you have obtained the RexxArpLibrary and installed it properly. It almost goes without saying that RexxMast should be started early on in the Amiga booting process, preferably in the User-startup sequence (see previous MasterClass episodes for details on how to do this).

The listing

The program works in the following way. First of all the rexxarplibrary is installed to make sure the special GUI features are present. Then at step two, the program tests to see if there is a file in the ENV: directory. Why does it do this?

One essential feature of these 'Tip of the Day' boxes is that you can switch them off when you become bored with them. This program has the built-in ability not to run anymore. As I said, it does this by looking to see if there is a file in the ENV: directory. If you remember, the ENV: is created at boot time when the Amiga copies the entire contents of the ENVARC: directory into RAM. ENVARC is used to store settings used by various application software, and so it is the perfect place to keep our on/off switch.

If the file is found to be present in ENV:, the program takes this as an indication that it is not to continue and so it stops dead: end of story.

If, however, the file doesn't exist then it's party time and the program continues.

Step three sees the definition of all the excellent tips you can think of. Add anything and everything here, from Amiga key shortcuts to insulting messages such as 'stop eating that chocolate, fatty!' You'll notice the use of compound variables, which are the ARexx equivalent to array variables. Each piece of text is assigned as a 'stem' to the 'root' variable which is called 'tip'.

The only trick to this process is including a '/' slash character when you want a line break. This is a special feature of the rexxarplibrary routines, and nothing to do with ARexx as such. The more messages you type in, the longer it will take you to become bored – if you have any good ones, send them in and we'll put them on the next CD-ROM!

Picking a tip at random is made quite easy because ARexx has an in-built function to generate random numbers. The only snag is that using the 'Random' command produces the same result every time you run the script – not very useful. We therefore scramble the results by setting the special random starting point to a value returned by the system clock. This produces the required unpredictable results.

Using the random number as a reference to the previously defined tips, we build up a new string starting with the words 'Tip of the day:' and pass the entire lot over to the Request command. This is what RexxArpLib is needed for and it displays the tip on-screen. You may need to alter the first two co-ordinates to position the box neatly in the middle of the screen.

Listing for program number two

```
/*

Tip of the Day

Produce a random piece of advice every time you boot your Amiga...

*/

/* Make sure RexxArpLibrary functions are available... */

addlib('rexxarplib.library',0,-30,0)

/* 1. Test to see if a Tip is allowed.

If there is a file in ENV: called TOTD, this means
the Tips are NOT to be used. If there is no file, the
Tips are to be displayed. */

if open('testfile','env:TOTD','r') then
     /* File exists, so exit */
     do
          close('testfile')
          exit
     end
     /* File doesn't exist, so carry on */

/* 2. Define all the tips */



tip.1="Don't eat fried food!"

tip.2="Get plenty of exercise!"

tip.3="Don't smoke!"

tip.4="Limit alcohol intake!"

tip.5="Take a 10 minute break every hour\you spend using your Amiga."

tip.6="Use Right-Amiga and the full-stop\to tidy up icons on the Workbench."

tip.7="Use Right-Amiga and A to select all\
the icons displayed min the current window."

tip.8="If you want to restart these tips\delete the file
called 'TPTD'\in the ENVARC: directory."



/* 3. Pick a tip at random! */

t=random(1,8,time('s')) tip=tip.t string="\Tip of the day:\\" || tip || "\"

/* 4. Display the tip */

if request(250,250,string,,"OK","No more tips") ~= "OKAY"
     then

/* 5. If no more tips are required, create the file */

if open('testfile','envarc:TOTD','w') then
          close('testfile')
     else
          say "error creating file!"
/* The end */
```

The Request function also returns a value, depending which button was pressed by the user. We test this value and if the user has requested no more tips, we create a file in ENVARC:. This file will stop the tips from appearing in the future, because the next time the Amiga restarts, it will be copied automatically to ENV:. There it will be found when the 'Tip of the Day' program starts, and nothing will happen.

Remember if you want to switch the tips back on, all you need to do is delete the TOTD file from the ENVARC: directory and re-boot.

Installing the program

We need the TOTD script to start at boot time and for ease of use I decided to make it an icon which we could place in the WBStartup drawer. This turned out to be slightly trickier than I first thought, although it is possible. First of all, test the script from the Shell with the RX command. Storing it in the RAM disk is a good place to keep it whilst we work on it. Remember that if you call it something like 'TOTD.REXX' you only need to use the command: rx totd at the Shell to start it. If you get a 'Host Environment not found' error, check that you have spelt the name of the rexxarplib.library properly, and that it is present in the LIBS: directory on your Workbench disk.

Making Icons

1: Using the IconEdit program in the Workbench/Tools drawer, create an icon for the program. Make sure you have defined it as a Project icon, and save it to the RAM disk with the name 'TOTD'.

2: Now we need to alter the Icon settings. Find the icon and highlight it with a single click. Now choose Information from the Workbench menu, Icon. You'll see something like this (see figure 2).

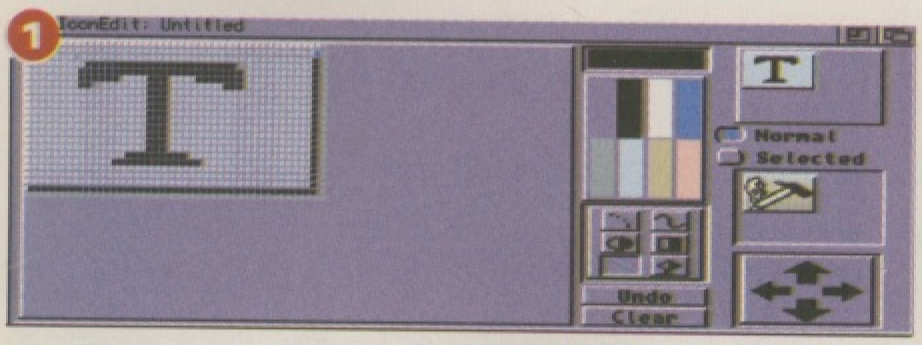
3: We need to set the default tool to read RX, the program which executes the ARexx script. If there is no Default Tool box, go back to the Icon Editor and make sure you have make the icon a 'Project' type, rather than the default 'Tool' type. Click in the 'Default Tool' box and enter RX.

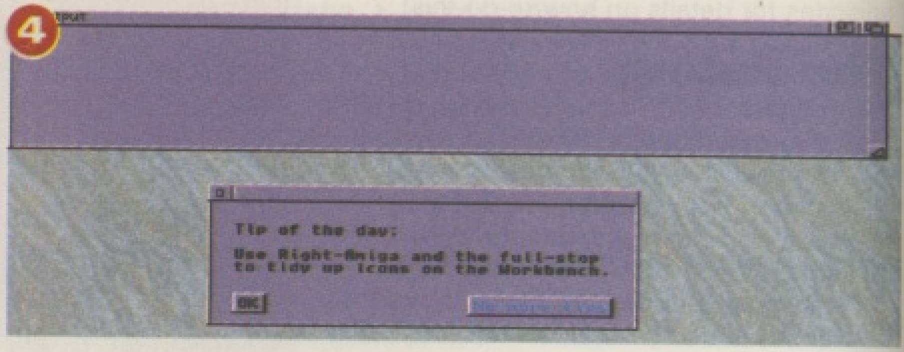
4: If you save these settings, you should be able to run the 'Tip of the Day' program simply by clicking on the icon. When you do, you'll see something like this (see figure 4).

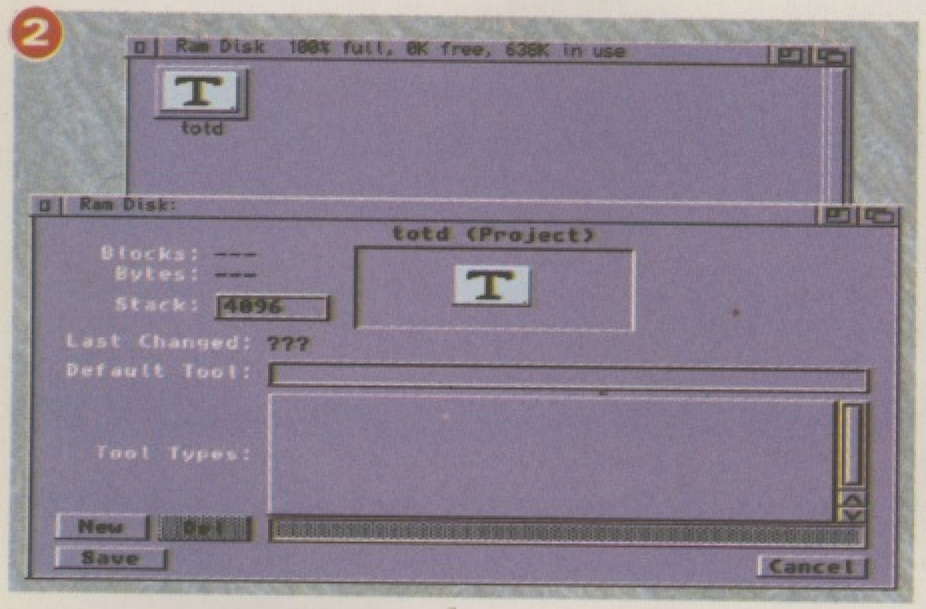
5: Yes, there is a rather horrible blank Shell window at the top of the screen. To stop this from appearing, and believe me this fact took a lot of discovering, you edit the Icon again (with the Information) option, and add a new ToolType called CONSOLE. This stops the Shell window from popping up.

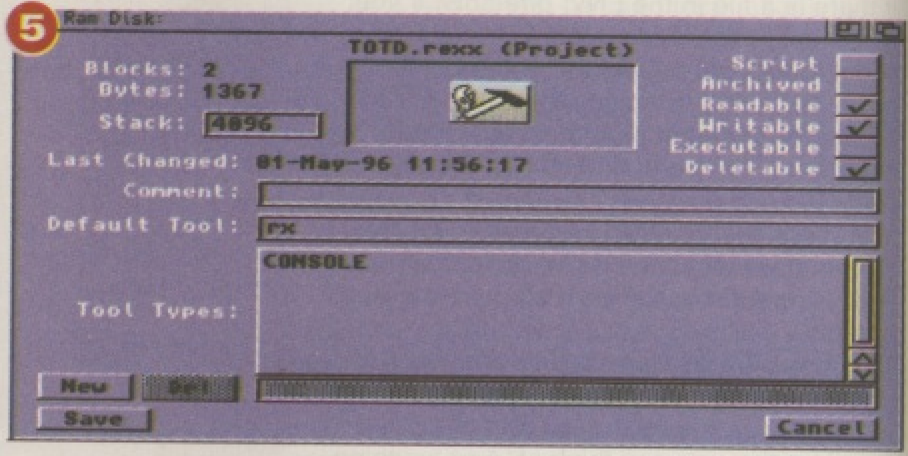
6: Now you can drag the icon into the WBStartup drawer, and reboot. Uh-oh ... all is not quite perfect. Sure, the exciting tip appears but there is also a very tedious requester appearing asking 'Should I wait?' The Workbench is concerned about this program and is asking if it should hang around for it to finish. The answer is of course that we don't need the Workbench to wait, so go back to the Icon definition once more and add DONOTWAIT to the list of tool types. At last, our 'Tip of the Day' program is complete! We'll be back with more helpful titbits of information about Arexx next month. ■

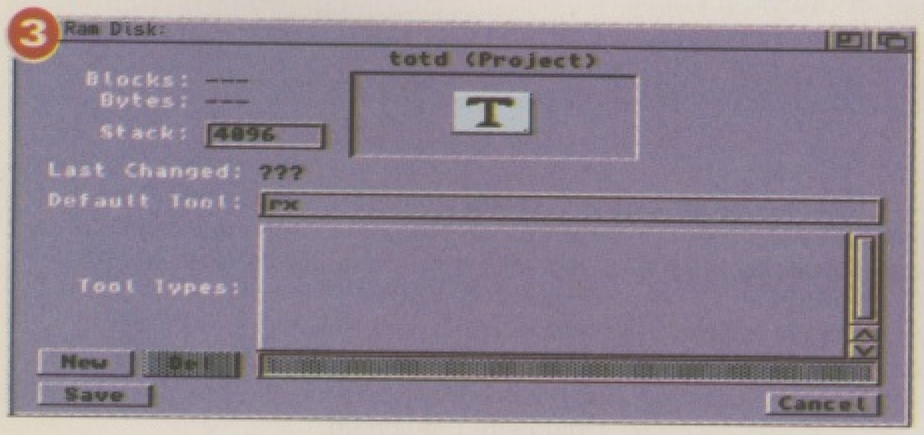
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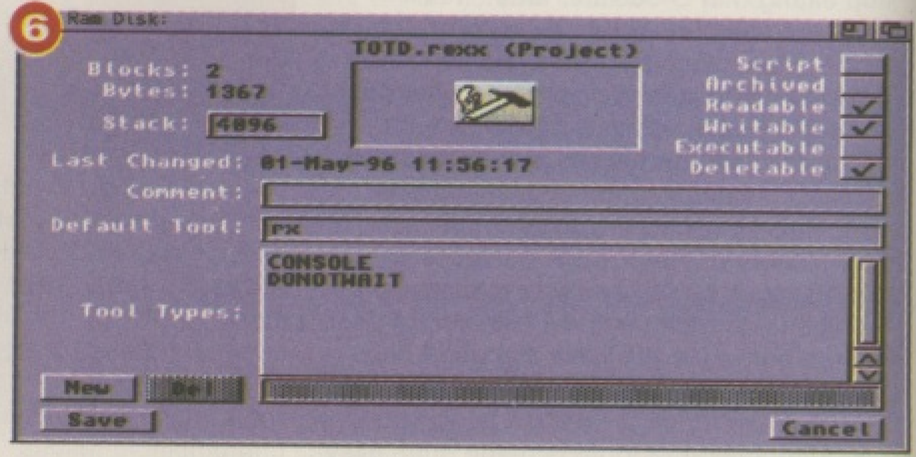












FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Never mind the Ps and Qs, it's time for the Q and As. This time we're painting a clearer picture of what you need to know about graphics.

Q What is the best way to get 'real' graphics into the Amiga?

A The Amiga is great at displaying and manipulating images: it's got some amazing software (such as Photogenics) and it can display images with millions of colours. However, getting realistic images into the Amiga can be expensive. One solution is a Graphics Tablet. If you can draw (or if you can trace) then a graphics tablet is easier to use than a mouse. Hardware such as the Power Tablet (from Power Computing – see CU Amiga Magazine May 1996 for the review) make it easy to sketch graphics into a standard paint package. The Tabby tablet, from First Computer Centre, is cheaper at £60, but smaller and less effective.

Q What sort of image scanner should I get?

A There are two types of image scanners: Hand and Flatbed. A hand scanner is dragged by the user across a flat photograph. The image is 'scanned' into the computer and appears on screen where it can be saved in standard IFF format. It can then be loaded into any art program for further processing. Hand scanners generally cost less than £100 for monochrome versions and less than £200 for full colour versions. They produce results which are adequate for desktop publishing use but require practice and patience.

Flatbed scanners look a little like photocopiers, the image to be scanned is placed on a glass screen and a lid is closed on top of it. Unlike the hand scanner, the light source and miniature camera are moved automatically. The results are excellent: a flatbed scanner easily produces the best results. A scanner such as the Epson GT5000 costs about £500, but will scan in full 24-bit colour (more than 16 million colours) in resolutions sharp enough for most applications. You do however need a suitable interface, and enough memory to store the often very large images.

Q What about video digitisers?

A A video digitiser, such as the Vidi Amiga 24 from Quantum Leap Software or the ProGrab from Gordon Hardwoods, has a huge advantage over scanners: you can take pictures of three dimensional objects. Armed with a camcorder you can film your subject and then grab the image in full colour. The days of keeping still in front of the video camera for days and using colour filers have long gone: the Vidi units can grab an individual frame of video. If you have an Amiga with Zorro slots, the VLAB image grabber is an excellent card. If you prefer moving images, consider VideoMaster from Eyetech. This little box connects to the A1200 via the PCMCIA port and can grab moving images and sound at up to 25 frames per second in shades of grey. Great for making your own animations!

Q Are there any other ways to get graphics into the Amiga?

A There are various other ways of importing graphics into the Amiga. If you have a CD-ROM drive, you might be able to find a chemist offering Kodak's PhotoCD service. Give them a roll of film exposed with an ordinary camera, and in return you'll get a CD-ROM with the pictures scanned and stored in amazing detail. For images on the move, keep a look out for Casio's new digital camera. It stores up to 96 images in its own memory and then you can download the pictures to a PC or Mac (and from these machines to the Amiga). Alternatively, the images can be viewed on TV, or recorded on to video – or grabbed with a video digitiser. The resolution isn't great but 16 million colours should make for good results. The Casio QV10 costs about £500.

Q What can I do with the graphics once I've captured them?

A Now the fun starts! With a package such as Photogenics you can do anything from painting moustaches on relatives to restoring old photographs. You could also create animations, basing the characters on real scanned images for bizarre Monty Python effects. You could convert your photograph collection to video, and use a program such as Scala to add titles, fades and wipes. If you have a World Wide Web site, you can convert the images to JPEG or GIF and let the rest of the on-line world see them too.

Q What sort of quality can I expect when printing graphics?

A Obviously it depends on your printer, but don't expect photographic results. Even a colour printer such as an Epson Stylus Pro costing nearly £500 will struggle to produce near-photographic quality images. This isn't a fault with the printer: it's simply extremely difficult to use ink and paper to re-create a photograph. The printout will be bright and colourful, but obviously not a photograph. However, if you really do need top-quality output, it can be achieved if you use a Desktop Publishing package to output the image in a format which you can bring to a commercial bureau. Some art packages will also save in suitable formats, and any Printer worth knowing will be able to deal with JPEG, TIFF or PostScript files.

Q Can scanned or digitised images be useful with rendering with programs like Imagine or Real3D?

A Absolutely! Scanning in your own textures is an excellent way to achieve photo-realism in your renders. Scan your desk and get an instant wood texture for wrapping around your own 3D model of a desk. You can also scan in pre-printed boxes or labels from cornflakes packets or lemonade tins and use them to decorate your objects. Or how about grabbing a sequence of images with VideoMaster, and then mapping the animation onto the screen of a rendered television set? When you combine real world images with 3D models you start to get some very interesting results. ■

John Kennedy

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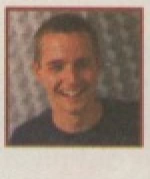
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Q&A

It's an Impossible Mission but we've done it. Yes, that's right our very own Impossible Mission Force (IMF) have tackled your most challenging technical questions and answered them and without an explosion in sight.



What a groovy tune Mission Impossible has. I'll have to have a go at mixing my own version.



Our very own Etham Hunt is ready to save you. "Now is it the red or green wire I cut?..."

Jungle jam

About a year ago I got into making music by joining my two Amigas together via a MIDI interface as you suggested in earlier magazines. After getting quite serious with this and recording stuff onto DAT I somehow got sidetracked and lost interest. Recently, however, after hearing some old Urban Shakedown tapes and their relatively up to date standard and quality I'm itching to do some more stuff. Two things I'd like to know: 1. What are some top quality current sample CDs/disks and where do I get them?
2. Could you recommend any good PD/shareware jungle techno modules that you can watch running on OctaMED for ideas and tutorials?

Andrew Tomlinson, Hull

This must be your lucky day! We've recently had a number of enquiries about making jungle tracks and so you'll find this month's Sound Lab is dedicated to just that. Tony has written an OctaMED module to accompany this. Although there wasn't room for it on this month's cover disks, you'll find it on the next covermounted CD-ROM and it's also available from the Aminet (in the 'mods/jungl' area). Now for your questions.
1. Time and Space (tel: 01442 870 681) have pretty much cornered the market for sample CDs and they have an excellent range. Those that will be of most interest to jungle producers will be Vinylistics 2, Zero G Jungle Warfare and That Jungle Flavour. These are audio CDs which all retail for £59.95 each. It's also worth looking through music technology magazines for adverts for sample CDs from other producers. We have yet to come across a decent set of Amiga IFF jungle samples on disk (apart from Urban Shakedown's excellent set which is available from PD distributors), but if anyone knows of such a collection please let us know.
2. The Aminet on-line archives and the Aminet CDs are a good source of modules, including jungle mods. Sheffra and Red Kaa are two composers who seem to be particularly prolific at the moment, so check out any of their work. The main man from Urban Shakedown also records as Aphrodite, so keep an eye out for any 12"s bearing that name for an idea of what they're up to now.

Plotters pound

I have an Amiga 1200, 200Mb hard disk, an external SCSI 730Mb hard disk and a Blizzard 1230 with 8Mb, on which I run Pagestream 2 and Wordworth. I want to buy an HP Plotter, specifically the DesignJet 230 or the DesignJet 250C which as you will know will print up to A0 in size and in one sheet.

I can't find a Workbench driver for this printer, I have contacted Hewlett Packard and they can't help me. I have also tried in vain to get help from the PD libraries. Here are a list of the drivers that will run the printer. HPGL, HPGL2, HP-RTL, PJL, HP7568B, HP 7 Range, Draft Master 8X. Do you know where I could get a driver from or have one written?

Paul Grey, Swansea.

You will need to use a structured drawing package (such as XCAD for example) to drive a plotter. Neither Pagestream nor Wordworth will work in this way. For high quality output from these packages your best bet is to go for a laser printer or a bubble jet printer, although we are not aware of any such printers which will output an A0 size page in one go.

Serial games

Like many Amiga owners, before I got a SCSI CD-ROM drive I used to connect my CD32 to my Amiga 1200 for file transfer using the network lead and CD-ROM. With the release of your excellent CD-ROM II on the April 1996 issue I noticed that Leading Lap could be played over a serial connection. Taking my heart in my hands, I tried connecting the CD32 to my A1200 via the lead and hey presto, it worked! You have to run the A500 version because the CD32 hasn't got enough RAM as standard, but it works like a dream.

Given this, I've now gotten to wondering which serial-linkable games have been issued on CD-ROM and have they kept their linking capabilities? I wonder if you or any other readers have tried this and if so, did it work? Perhaps you could compile a list for those of us fortunate enough to own both a CD32 and another Amiga.

Jamie Winter, Hants.

Alien Breed 3D CD edition should work in the same way, although someone has pinched our copy so we can't say for sure at the moment!

GVP grumbles

My Amiga crashes and refuses to re-boot after about half and hour whenever I have my GVP A1230-II accelerator installed, either with or without its 1Mb RAM SIMM. I also have an internal 40Mb

Quantum hard drive. I remember hearing that GVP had folded and so was unable to return the board to them. I sent the A1230 to First Computer Centre who offer a repair service. They tested the components that they could but were unable to find a fault leading them to conclude that the problem is with the GVP custom chips.

I would be grateful if you could either print a contact address for GVP, if they still exist and are able to fix faults or an address of some-one who can mend the board.

Owen Brown, Bristol.

You are right in your belief that GVP are no more, however all is not lost yet. The GVP technology was purchased by the German Amiga peripheral developer MTEC and the UK developer Power Computing. If you ask Power Computing nicely they might be able to help you, although there will obviously be a charge for the service. Power Computing can be contacted on 01234 273000.

By the way, it is worth bearing in mind that this could be a symptom of the A1200's inadequate power sup-ply, although this would probably have been happening as long as you have had the A1230 and the hard drive if this is the case.

Imagine Patches Galore

A few months ago I received my upgrade of Imagine 4.0 from Impulse and was quite frustrated with some problems that I had to sort out before I could use it properly.

I suspect that all users who have installed it have had exactly the same problems as I have had and may not have figured out why. Here is how to fix some of them.

Firstly, Imagine 4.0 claims to be auto-sensing as to whether it is running on a PAL or NTSC machine. This is true, although when selecting About from the pull down menu I get a message saying it is an NTSC version. And then when I rendered, I was presented with an NTSC screen size. This is fixed by loading the Config file into a text editor and replacing all the screen presets with the PAL screen presets from my version of 3.3. This sorted out that problem. Here are some of the main definitions.

```
HAM,320,256,11,10,HAM
HAM Overscan,352,282,11,10,HAM
HAM Quarterscreen,160,128,11,10,HAM
Lores,320,256,11,10
Lores Overscan,352,282,11,10
Lores Quarterscreen,160,128,11,10
Hires,640,512,11,10,HIRES|LACE
Hires Overscan,704,564,11,10,HIRES|LACE
Hires Quarterscreen,320,256,11,10,HIRES|LACE
HAM8,320,256,11,10,AAcs|HAM
Hires8,640,512,11,10,AAcs|HAM|HIRES|LACE
Laced HAM8,320,512,22,10,AAcs|HAM|LACE
Hires HAM8,640,512,11,10,AAcs|HAM|HIRES| LACE
```

Also there were problems with the demo attrib-utes that were supplied. Every time I tried to use them, it threw up an error message saying that it couldn't find the textures. I ran Snoopdos 3.0 and saw that the path it was using was MS-DOS directory syntax and not AmigaDOS. You have to load each of the attribute files into a binary editor, such as FileX and use Search and Replace to change all the backslashes '\' with the correct forward slash '/'. Now most of attributes will work. The reason why the others won't is that they require textures from a directory called 'Tookkit2' that is missing. Does anyone know or have the files that should go in this drawer?

When using the supplied Quick Attribs, the program claims that they do not exist. To sort this out go into the Preferences Editor and scroll down until you find the line containing the Quick Attribs directory. There you will see, yet again, an MS-DOS backward slash. Replace this with the correct AmigaDOS forward slash. Save, then reload to cure the problem.

I hope that this has helped some of you who might be new to Imagine and have only just got version 4.0. But here is a plea to all you users of Imagine – REGISTER and show Impulse how many Amiga users there are so they can keep us in mind. According to them the ratio of PC users of Imagine to Amiga users is 3 to 1. Stand up and be counted.

Darrel Hannan, South Africa

Thanks for that Darrel. As to registering with Impulse, we wholeheartedly support you in your call for other Amiga Imagine users to register - if software houses don't know you use their software you can't expect them to keep issuing updates.

Net enquiries

I'm thinking about buying a modem to send Email and look at this Internet thing.

1. Can I send and read Email to and from PCs on my Amiga?

2. How come I only pay a local phone call price even if I'm looking at Internet pages in America?

3. I've been offered a 9600bps modem for £70, is it worth it?

Peter Nielsen, Slough.

1. Yes. Once you have the software on your Amiga to send and receive Email it doesn't matter where it's going to or where it's come from. You can freely exchange Email between PCs, Amigas, Macs, and other types of computer.

2. You only pay for the telephone call to your Internet provider. This provider will be linked into the Internet (a global network of data transmission lines) which is not a telephone line and is not controlled or owned by a commercial company. Other users around the world are connected to this either directly or via their own local Internet providers.

3. No, 9,600bps modems are too slow for efficient comms and Internet work. 9,600bps is the speed rating of the modem, telling you that it can send or receive 9,600 bits per second. Newer modems, by comparison, can handle 14,400 and 28,000 bits per second. Apart from the inconvenience of a slow modem, the money you save by in buying a cheap slow one will soon be offset against the higher phone bills that will arise from longer downloading and uploading sessions. Get nothing less than a 14,400 rated modem, preferably faster.

Octamed's aura

I am an avid user of OctaMED on my standard Amiga 1200, no upgrades, hard drive or any-thing and have been for a few years now. I recent-ly bought the Hi-Soft Aura sound card and have hit a serious prob-lem; the 12-bit sampling works fine with its own software but when I try to use it with OctaMED (V5.04 and V6 demos) the extra channel plays with a distorted, inferior quality – much worse than 8 bit.

I've rung both HiSoft and RBF Software and they seem to be 'passing the buck' a bit but neither can fully identify with my problem. Is it something to do with a code dispute between the two compa-nies or something? Maybe my sound card is broken or I need the proper OctaMED program because I'm pretty sure it's not due to how I'm using OctaMED.

Elwyn Haddy, Liverpool.

Yes, you're right, everything is not rosy when it comes to the marriage of the Aura sampler and OctaMED. For whatever reason, there were some communication troubles between the developers of the two products. The OctaMED developers RBF Software were supplied some program code to drive the Aura but this seems to have been incomplete. Because RBF couldn't manage to get hold of an Aura card before the release of V6 they were unable to test this out.

We spoke to RBF who told us that they had been promised new revised program code to drive the Aura. With any luck when this is in place you should be able to route your modules through the Aura in 12 bit stereo, with panning and real-time echo effects. This is one of the details which is holding back the release of OctaMED SoundStudio, which is currently scheduled for a release around mid June. Support for an exciting new DSP/sound card called Delfina (a Zorro card for big box Amigas) has already been added. We'll bring you the review as soon as it's completed.

Send your Q&A problems to...

You can send your technical problems or answers to CU Amiga Magazine by the following means:

By letter to Q&A, CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Email: Q+A@cu-Amiga.co.uk.

NO SAES PLEASE We regret that we can't respond to readers' questions by post or over the phone. Please do not include a stamped addressed envelope with your letters, as we simply don't have time to answer the thousands we receive. Responses are only available through the pages of this magazine.

Points of view

The way things are

By Alan Dykes

"Should I upgrade my Amiga, or get a PC/Playstation/Saturn"? Every day we get letters and phone calls asking this question. It's frustrating, but it's understandable. Not everyone bought their Amiga for its superb productivity

> **Things move on but some move on at a more realistic pace than others. The Amiga has been and still is the most out-of-date proof computer there is.**

ability, its friendly OS, its simple upgradability and the punch it packs into a small box. Many bought their Amiga only to discover this at a later date. That's the beauty of the machine, it's full of surprises and few of them are nasty.

Those who ask us whether they should buy another machine or upgrade their Amiga say they are doing so because they've "got to think ahead to the future". Hold on! Many of those who discovered just

> **This is no time to stop and have doubts mid-stream. Upgrading transforms your Amiga and where it matters it still outshines the competition.**

how great a machine the Amiga is have upgraded it to make it even better. And believe it or not this is forward thinking. There are Amiga users out there using 10-year-old machines and quite happily doing so. Try talking to a PC or Mac user who's doing the same. Sure they're out there, with their black screens and their green and orange text, but there's not many and they're not enjoying it. Hey weirdo, get a life!



■ Alan Dykes is editor of CU Amiga Magazine.

The A500 user is much maligned in this office. (And rightly so, if he'd bought an A1200 two years ago we might not be in the mess we are in now.) However, many A500 owners have upgraded their machines too. They've installed hard drives, upped RAM, even attached CD-ROM drives. Us magazines give you a hard time, but let me salute you just this once, a heartfelt salute because I know what you've been through. It's popular for us journalists to be accused of idly recommending something, after all, EMAP is paying for all our kit. Wrong. We've all had our fair share of buying and upgrading, both before and after we started working for magazines. What do you think we use at home? Freebies are few and far between, and never seem to be worth more than a tenner.

Foresight

The person who bought their A500 eight years ago and upgraded it could really be said to have been a visionary. It's only in the last two years or so that this first wedge become obsolescent, that mainstream software has left it behind. And even so it's still very usable. In the same period of time you'd have had to buy two if not three PCs to keep up to date, at six or seven times the cost and still the software would be leapfrogging you every couple of months. Furthermore, the A1200 owner of today will probably be ticked off in a few year's time just the same as A500 owners are now (in fact anyone with less than an 030 is already in the dog house these days – including myself I'm afraid).

Things move on, but some move on at a more realistic pace than others. The Amiga has been and still is the most out-of-date proof computer there is.

The answer to the question "should I upgrade, or should I buy something else?", depends wholly on your priorities. Did you buy your Amiga solely for games? Have you no other use whatsoever for it? Well go buy a Playstation then. I will not sit here and pretend that the Amiga will have Playstation style games by next Tuesday week. What's the point?

It's all a game

But is there more to life than games? Surely there must be or you would have bought a MasterSystem or NES, a Megadrive or SNES instead of your Amiga. And there's a lot more to life than chugging around in DOS and Windows too. Believe me I know.

If you bought that Amiga for all the good reasons then this is no time to stop and have doubts in mid-stream. Upgrading transforms your Amiga, and where it matters it still outshines the competition. It was designed so that you can upgrade it bit by bit, and although the overall cost may be higher than you thought you're not shelling out all at once – you get more of what you need when you need it and not a moment before.

By all means buy a Playstation if you want fantastic new games, but if you want a solid computer then stick with your Amiga and upgrade it – your current software will be so much sweeter and it will open up so many more possibilities.

Dear games publisher ...

By Martin Davies

The time has come for publishers to get realistic about Amiga games. With the Escom upgrade deal and the amount of CD-ROMs and accelerators now attached to tens of thousands of Amiga 1200s there is a big new user base out there. It's time you started giving us the games we want.

So sales are bad? So retailers won't stock games? Tough. You've got no-one to blame but yourselves (OK, and probably Commodore too). Maybe if you offered the Amiga community the sort of games we could get excited about, we'd buy them. You do it for every other format don't you? Let's face it, it's not just that there's very little new Amiga software about, it's that what's launched is usually just the same old stuff. In the spheres of PC and console the CD-ROM has opened up major new possibilities and these are also available for Amiga. CD-ROM has only got big on Amiga in the last year, so most people have their drives for under 12 months. This is the real 'new user base', but not a lot of people seem to know this. If a decent multimedia CD-ROM game was brought out for Amiga, and it was advertised and publicised, it would sell in droves. Apparently no-one is making money on PC CD-ROMs because here is just so many. For God's sake produce a few on Amiga then. WE DON'T HAVE ANY!

It doesn't matter if high street retailers don't take your product. Look through the pages of this magazine and see how many advertisers have CD-ROM products on their pages. Mail Order is now an established channel for Amiga CD-ROM.

> **So sales are bad? So retailers won't stock games? Tough. You've got no-one to blame but yourselves (OK, and probably Commodore too).**

While floppy disk traditionalists may still be reluctant to buy mail order, CD-ROM users have known nothing else. Take another look at those CD-ROM pages. No games eh? This is not because they don't sell, it's because no-one has realised that there is a market out there for them. Come on guys, get some decent CD-ROM games in development.

■ Martin Davies is a freelance writer and Amiga fanatic.

To be or not to be

By David Pleasance

Before I evaluate the potential future of Amiga in the hands of new owners it is worth taking a look at a synopsis of the current situation since the assets were purchased by Escom in April 1995.

There has been a major loss of confidence in Amiga as a brand name and as a product of technical superiority. The protracted sale of Commodore assets was always going to adversely affect the Amiga's standing. However, other factors have contributed to the worsening position to date:

1. There has been a decline in the retail distribution channels, particularly in the UK. Escom is a retailer and as such is a competitor to the very core of the Amiga's past success – other retailers. Asking them to stock and sell Amiga is like asking them to buy some of Comet's 'own brand' products, direct from Comet. They will not do it. The independents, who have always been the backbone of the Amiga success story, have been forced into stocking and selling PCs to survive during the period of Commodore's troubles. Escom are the thorn in the independents' side, with massive advertising and cut-throat pricing. Ask yourself this: would you support your main adversary by buying his product?

2. The current Amiga user base has been ignored. Bringing four year old technology back to the market is simply not good enough. The Amiga A1200/A4000 owners are the most significant audience in Amiga history and it is this target market that must be addressed.

3. There has been no investment in research and development, advertising and marketing. Amiga owners were always proud of the technology and how technologically advanced it was. Not any more. Advertising yesterday's products in magazines primarily bought by existing owners is pointless.

If VIScorp do become the new owners of the Amiga patents and trademarks they have a couple of significant advantages over Escom. Firstly they are a technology driven organisation, where research and development are key. They employ several highly regarded former Commodore engineers and given the right direction they could develop exciting new Amiga hardware.

Secondly, they have integrity. They have a good working relationship with their suppliers, employees and trading partners. All of this translates into a feelgood factor which can only benefit the market in general. Thirdly, they are not retailers! With no prior experience of retail sales and marketing channels they have an opportunity to create a model distribution network.

> **If VIScorp do become the new owners of the Amiga patents and trademarks they have a couple of significant advantages over Escom.**

The way forward

1. Establish alliances with third party developers. Select companies whose product portfolios can compliment the in-house activities that VIScorp are currently undertaking and pool resources to achieve maximum results in the shortest possible time scale.

2. Make a strategic decision on new product development, announce it and stick to it! The Amiga community was formed as a result of hardware which in its day was superior and cost effective. We must once again lead the field and earn the loyalty of the best supporters in the world.

3. Introduce a low cost upgrade path for existing A1200 and A4000 owners. Develop a system which would provide a basis for continuous upgradability. This is a must.

4. Establish a bespoke sales and marketing division. A new owner with no previous experience (or stigma) of retail channel distribution has a wonderful opportunity to establish a global sales and marketing network, recruiting people of credibility and expertise. This is one of the most promising aspects that the change in circumstances presents.

5. Establish a software developer support program. Having the best hardware in the world is useless without substantial serious software to run on it. This was possibly Commodore's biggest failure. Also, VIScorp are going to need lots of games software for their set-top system, so they have a good starting point in terms of leverage with the developer community.

6. Have regular dialogue with end users. It is essential that regular feedback is obtained from the users of Amiga/VIScorp products. They say what they want, then, if it is a) financially viable, b) feasible and c) a substantial enough market, it makes good sense to provide what they have asked for.

■ David Pleasance is the Managing Director of Tangent Music Design and ex MD of Commodore UK. If you have any comments on his Point Of View please feel free to write to Backchat or to him personally at the CU Amiga Magazine address.

Backchat

Starting a chain reaction, our April Points of View and May Amiga Quest feature seemed to have whipped up a frenzy of response. Get in the middle of things and and write in our opinion.

Bad analogy

I disagree with the Ford vs Jaguar letter from Kevin Coate (May Backchat). I can't agree with the analogy that of the Amiga being the Ford Escort of the computer world or that the PC is technically superior. It's just different. The Amiga has been very much a specialist manufactured Ford Escort, to maintain a motoring analogy, that reflects both cost and performance to the PC at far less cost.

The Amiga, by nature, is a multimedia application and with improved expandability in the future is good news. If software is developed to improve its performance in all areas the future looks bright.

Moving towards PC compatibility must be good for the Amiga but only as long as the Amiga's much vaunted innate capabilities are not sacrificed en route.

The Amiga should always be first and foremost a graphics machine with expandability rather than a general purpose machine which can be expanded to cope with graphics. Its success with LightWave in TV sci-fi production alone bears this out and really ought to be more widely proclaimed. Maybe the programme makers could include some credit to the Amiga at the end? After all, it's in their own interests to keep newer and better Amiga machines and software under development.

Steve Clark, Isle of Wight.

If anyone would like to comment on any of the letters in the pages or any other pages please write in to the usual address.

Letter of the month

I'd always respected Jonathan Anderson until I read his opinion, in Alan Dykes' points of view (April 96), that mounting full games on cover disks harms the Amiga. What a pillock and good riddance. Cover mounted software has kept the Amiga scene going during these difficult times along with PD and shareware.

I suppose Jonathan's entitled to his view but from a man in such an important position you would expect a little more common sense. For example, a while ago a rival Amiga magazine released version 2 of Imagine. A friend of mine was so impressed that he actually bought an Amiga on the basis of it as well as the next release of Imagine. If that cover disk hadn't been released I doubt he would even own an Amiga right now. My brother recently acquired Imagine for his Amiga.

Also, when CU Amiga Magazine cover mounted imagine 3 (January 96) it spurred me on to invest in a 50Mb for my Viper 080. So, in all, your cover disk generated £100 of business for Power Computing and that's just from one reader.

As for cover mounting games, Alan was right. The games market has been in decline for a while now. So, a good kickstart could be to break the agreement you have with software publishers and go the way of utilities ie putting a complete version of a classic game on the cover disk. For example, when a sequel to a good game comes out you could cover mount the original.

Think realistically a moment. Can you honestly see anyone going to their local supplier and asking for a copy of the original Skidmarks when version 2 is such a great game and you can pick it up for as little as £15.

Releasing older games as cover mounts will not only keep people's interest in the games market but will encourage people to upgrade.

My thoughts and ideas may not be quite the thing that's needed to keep things going but something has to be done. People are leaving. To use that well known phrase 'upgrade or die', because if you don't we poor people who have invested so much time and money will suffer because people are too short sighted.

Barrie Pennington, South Glamorgan.

Save me, save me

I have just read Alan Dykes' April Point of View and cannot say how much I agree with his sentiments about cover disks saving the Amiga market, not killing it.

Three years ago I bought my first computer, a bog standard A1200. No fancy bits, just the bare works, after all I only needed it to write a few letters as I lazed around in Tenerife enjoying my retirement. I also intended writing a book. However, I still haven't gotten around to writing that book or any letters either. Why? It's because of your cover disks that's why.

Let me explain. I'm interested in video making and editing so when I got my hands on your video titling cover disks I had to follow it up and before I knew it I had bought another program on video titling, a genlock, a MicroVitec monitor and a digitiser. I wasn't intending to expand my Amiga set up any further but then the Adorage cover disk came along. Like many other people I took

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



Raymond's last day as the band's sound technician.

For my first quest

The article 'Amiga Quest' by Alan Bunker, Lisa Collins and Alan Dykes on the availability of games and software for the Amiga last month was top notch.

In response I think I should tell you about some of the problems I've had. I am a student at Bangor University and in the town centre there are three shops which sell computer software. However, I am not satisfied with any of them. In WH Smiths, I could only find one Amiga title – Heimdall 2 for the A500. Admittedly there weren't many other titles for any other system in there, so perhaps you can't blame them.

The second shop Rural Computers seem to have given up on the Amiga altogether, selling only PC software, although they do have one or two Amiga mice.

The third shop Acme Computer Games are the Amiga saviours of Bangor, as they do have quite a few Amiga titles including older and some of the newer titles but the bloke in the shop there didn't seem very positive about he Amiga. The only shop I can truly say I have been happy to go in to for Amiga stuff is Cavendish Commodore Computers but now they do sell PC packages as well.

Roy Ridgewell, Gwynedd.

For my next quest

I felt that I had to write in following your article in the May issue entitled "Amiga Quest' . Inspired by your article I decided to do a little investigation of my own. I went into my local Escom shop and got the same disheartening response as in your article. Luckily, when I went into the Silica Store in Chelmsford I spotted a group of people crowded around an A1200 running Final Writer.

The Electronic Boutique in Chelmsford also had a very welcoming presence of Amiga software and they even stocked CD32 software. I am normally a mail order buyer because I am lazy and think that the supplier should come to you not vice versa. However, since discovering that there are actually people on the high street supporting the machine I have spent about £85 on games alone. Lord knows what would happen if there was serious software on the shelves also.

Michael Barkhordar, Essex.

We've had a lot of response to our Amiga Quest article and welcome readers writing in telling us of their experience. Please write to the usual address if you have had similar experiences in trying to get Amiga software and hardware. We'd like to hear some of the more positive experiences you've had so we can compile an up to date breakdown of where you can get Amiga products.



advantage of the video offer. Then as I started using up too much space on floppies I had to buy a 280Mb hard drive. Now I can not only store my programs on hard drive but I can access them faster.

Some of my video titles are now so complex that I need more RAM and a more sophisticated version of Adorage. Then the next cover disk was Clarissa 2.0 for faster smoother animations. I'm hooked. You are right when you say that cover disks stimulate users into trying later versions and creates the need to upgrade in all directions. I'm proof of that.

When I left my job the two programs that I had to begin with were Wordworth and Deluxe Paint. These were given to me as part of my retirement collection. On a pension I can still manage to expand and look forward to repeat my promise to myself not to bother with all that expansion stuff but those cover disks still keep coming and leading me astray.

Please stop the cover disks, I must eat sometime. I can't believe that anyone with an Amiga is able to resist buying at least some small item now and again. If I can afford it on a state pension then there must be a whole lot of others who can also, after all it isn't an expensive PC is it?

Mr Rushton, Tenerife.

It's good to hear that you enjoy the cover disks and you, like the letter of month reader, grasp the concept behind cover disks: to provide you with quality software and to encourage people to get the most out of their Amiga.

Moan, moan, moan

It seems that about 50% of the letters you print in Backchat are from frustrated readers complaining about the lack of software support. Wouldn't it be better if people wrote in with ideas to help remedy the situation instead of constantly moaning.

I suggest that people actually write into software houses, if you give them the support they need they may well support the Amiga. I have already written to Team 17 and Gametek and received positive responses. So quit moaning and do something.

Paul Slinger, West Yorks.

A man of action, that's what we like to see. Good on you Paul.

Community care

I, along with many others, have followed the events in the Amiga world with tumultuous emotions. I watched helplessly as Medhi Ali and his team destroyed everything that the visionaries behind the Amiga had worked to achieve. I was crestfallen at Commodore's demise yet unsurprised. I waited with bated breath for one long year whilst negotiations were bated back between hordes of parasitic lawyers.

I was both elated and disappointed at Escom's acquisition of the carcass the vultures had left behind. Elated, because finally the Amiga appeared to have been saved. Disappointed because I had hoped that the Commodore UK team would be successful in bidding.

Now we enter yet another period of uncertainty as the VIScorp discussions with Escom proceed. Will the Amiga ever return to the street? I don't know but I hope so. Why? because no other machine has such a community behind it. Don't say that the Amiga is dying. It's ill but not critically so just yet. Don't give up keep the Amiga community alive even if the corporate types decide to let it die.

Jonathan M Holin, Leeds.

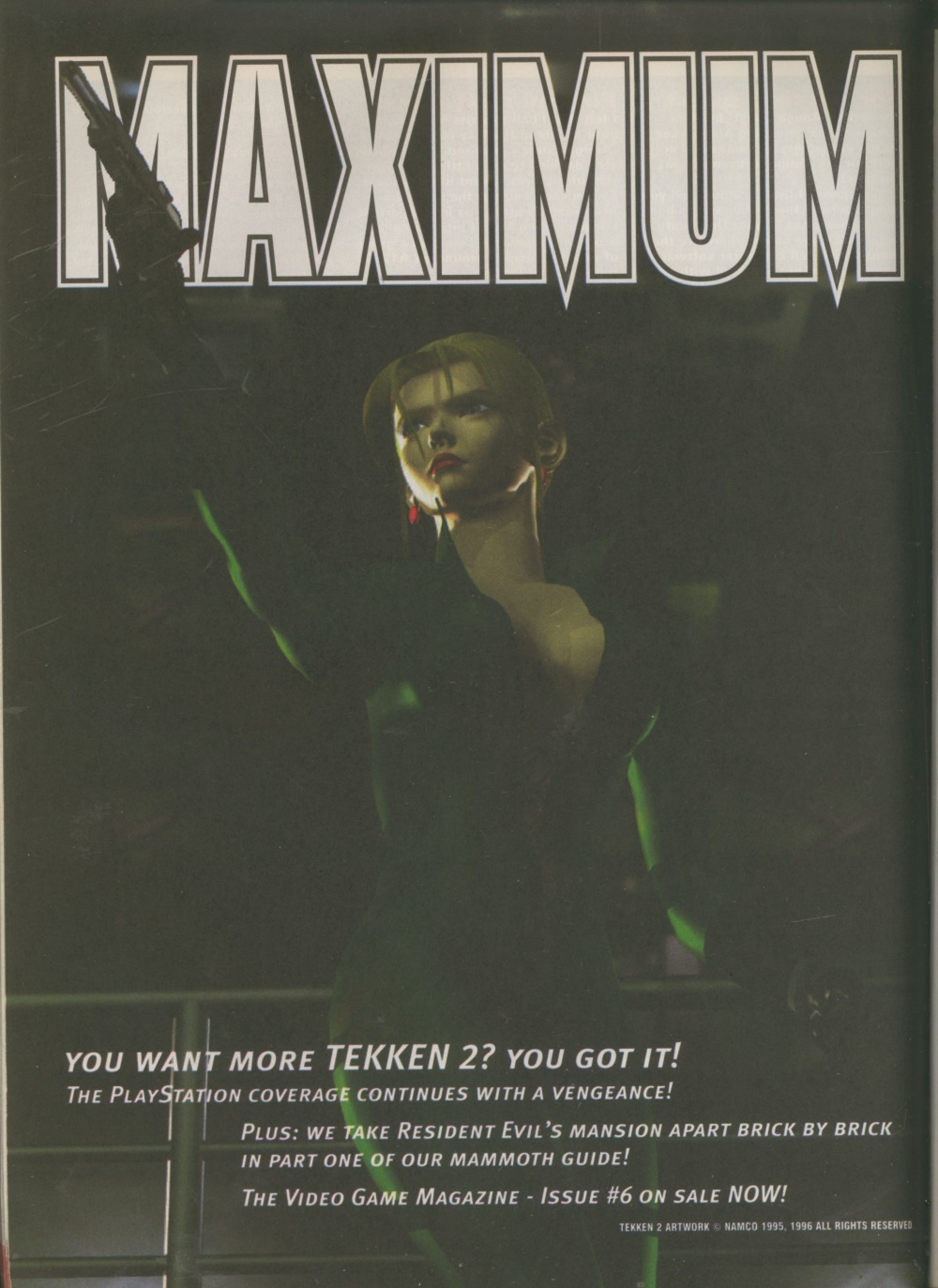
Cheer up Jonathan, all is not lost. Turn to this month's news pages if you haven't already and read about all the exciting new developments under way.

CD–ROM sub

I am delighted about the special offer of 12 issues of CU Amiga Magazine for the price of eight. However, I would like to know if I will be able to opt for the CD–ROM issue when I subscribe.

Graham H Armitage, Leeds.

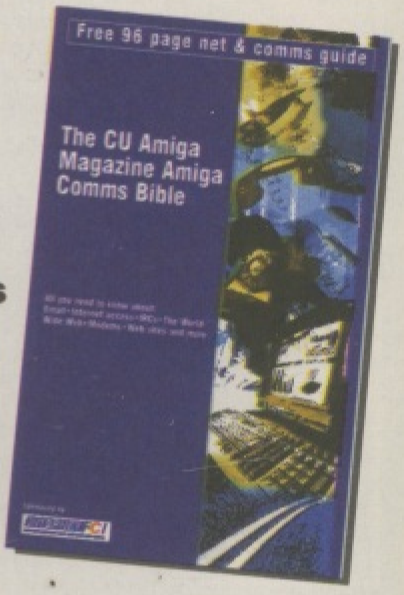
Since our last two CD–ROMs were such a success we get a lot of people asking this question. Good news. Subscribers automatically get both versions of the magazine when there is a CD-ROM issue.


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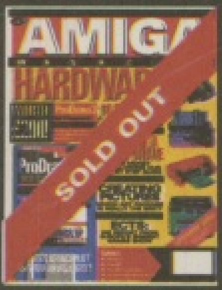
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http://www.cu-amiga.co.uk

Back Issues

Miss CU Amiga Magazine. Miss out. Don't let it happen to you. Ring back issues now.

May 1995



ON THE DISKS: ProDraw 3, OctaMED 6 and Baldies demos.
FEATURE: Ten printers reviewed, rated and recommended.
INSIDE: ECTS report, Brutal Preview, DPaint, Personal Paint, Photogenics and Brilliance compared.

June 1995



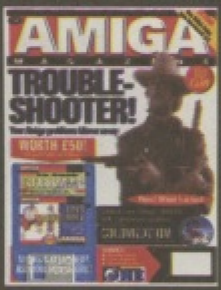
ON THE DISKS: Image FX 1.5 (all Amigas with 2Mb), USM demo.
FEATURE: Image processing explained using free cover disk.
INSIDE: RAM speed test: Blizzard 1230 III, Siren Apollo, Octamed 6 reviewed, Primal Rage, Sensible Golf previewed.

July 1995



ON THE DISKS: Adorage 2.0, Power-base v3.4, Arcade Snooker-full game.
FEATURE: Step by step guide to the Net.
INSIDE: First report on Escom, LightWave 4 previewed, Cinema 4D, Scala MM400, Virocop and TM2 reviewed.

August 1995



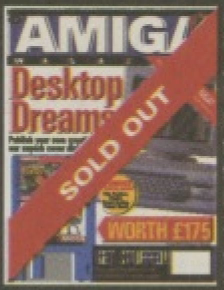
ON THE DISKS: Clarissa 2.0 and demo of Cammy Vs Honda in SSF II.
FEATURE: Trouble shooting on your Amiga
INSIDE: DPaint 5 review, the new A400/060 with CyberVision graphics, Games: Colonization, Sensible Golf, Time Keepers, PM 2.

September 1995



ON THE DISKS: OctaMED 5.04, Speris Legacy, Time Keepers.
FEATURE: Sex and computers: an indepth look at what there is and what people think about it.
INSIDE: Alien Breed 3D , Gloom, SSFII, Brutal, ViroCop A500, Base Jumpers CD32.

October 1995



ON THE DISKS: Pagestream 2.2, Fears and Citadel demo.
FEATURES: Using your PageStream cover disk for DTP, Storage: HDs floppies and CD-ROMs.
INSIDE: Odyssey, Real 3D v3, PageStream 3.0i and a multimedia station reviewed.

November 1995



ON THE DISKS: AudioMaster IV full program, Virtual Karting demo, CD-ROM edition-Aminet 7 and more.
FEATURES: CD-ROM definitive guide to drives and disks.
INSIDE: Cinema 4D, Mac™ Emulation, Final Writer 4, Pinball Mania.

December 1995



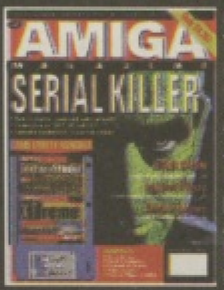
ON THE DISKS: Worms demo, Amiga E full program plus free Amiga E manual
FEATURES: Programming, Amiga music.
INSIDE: Leading Lap, Worms, Flight of the Amazon Queen, Coala, FinalCalc and Amiga M1438S Monitor.

January 1996



ON THE DISKS: Imagine 3.0 full program, Zeewolf 2 & Algomusic
FEATURES: 3D rendering using our cover disk.
INSIDE: MiconiK Tower, World Construction Set, Amilink, Zeewolf 2, SWOS 95/96, Super Tennis Champions and much more.

February 1996



ON THE DISKS: TextureStudio plus Imagine objects, DVerb, Mandel 92, Bluff Titler, Amiga E source code, Xtreme Racing.
FEATURES: Serial linking, portable Amiga prototypes and the first Net Wedding.
INSIDE: DiskMagic, HiSoft CD-ROM, Virtual i glasses.

March 1996



ON THE DISKS: VideoStage Pro, Imgauge & XFD, Gloom Deluxe and 10 Worms levels.
FEATURES: VideoStage and The future of Games.
INSIDE: 060 for A1200, Wordworth 5, Blitz Basic, Super Street Fighter II Turbo, Super Skidmarks data disk.

April 1996



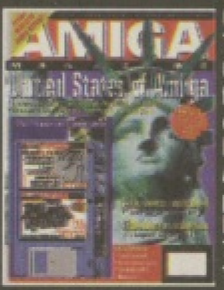
ON THE DISKS: AmiFileSafe, Leading Lap SE – 5 level full game. CD-ROM edition available.
FEATURES: Virus Protection and Wallace & Gromit in the right computer.
INSIDE: SX 32, HIQ Station, The Chaos engine previewed, Zeewolf 2 tips, and more...

May 1996



ON THE DISKS: Soundtracker Pro II, MIDI Sequencer demo, Alien Breed 3D2 demo.
FEATURES: Free Amiga music book, the new Walker, Amiga Surfer pack, and the quest for Amigas.
INSIDE: LightWave 4, Slamtilt Pinball, Tracksuit Manager 2 reviewed.

June 1996



ON THE DISKS: Termite demo, Killing Grounds demo. Plus free 96 page net and comms guide.
FEATURES: Escom sells Amiga Technologies, publish your music.
INSIDE: Modem round-up, Total Football and new TimeKeepers disk reviewed.

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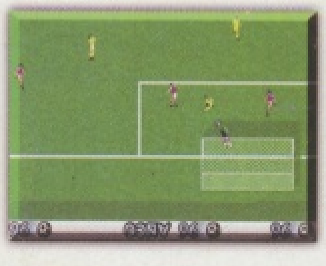
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